Chronology


This section is part fifty-three of a chronology begun in JPS 23, no. 3 (Spring 1984). Chronology dates reflect Eastern Standard Time. For more detail on events related to the peace process, see the Peace Monitor in this issue.

16 NOVEMBER

Dore Gold, adviser to Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu, meets with Arafat adviser Mahmoud Abbas, PA Information M Yasar ‘Abid Rabbu to discuss a memorandum of understanding or pledges concerning aspects of Oslo II that have not been implemented that Netanyahu would extend to Arafat as part of a Hebron deal. (ITV 11/16 in WNC 11/19, JP 11/23)

Arafat adviser Abbas heads to Amman to brief King Hussein on talks with Israel. (ITV 11/16 in WNC 11/19)

Lebanese FM Faris Buwayz tells PM Rafiq Hariri that, after his mtg. with U.S. Amb. Richard Jones 11/15, he is pessimistic that Israeli negotiations with Syria will resume soon. (RL 11/16 in WNC 11/19)

Hamas mbr. Muhammad Assaf is killed in an explosion in Qabatiyya, West Bank. Israel claims that a bomb that he was preparing for a suicide attack in Israel went off accidentally. Palestinian Security Forces (PSF) arrest 5 men with ties to Assaf. (NYT, WP, WT 11/17; ITV 11/17 in WNC 11/19, 11/29, JP 11/23)

17 NOVEMBER

Israeli, PA negotiations on Hebron resume in Jericho. (RJ 11/18 in WNC 11/19)

Israel Defense Forces (IDF) eases closure, allowing 7,000 Palestinians fr. Gaza, 8,000 fr. West Bank into Israel to work, raising the total number of Palestinians allowed into Israel to 50,000. (WT 11/17)

In Ramallah, PA releases 3 Hamas mbrs. fr. jail to mark the 8th anniversary of the Palestine National Council’s declaration of independence. (MM 11/18)

Shin Bet announces that it has detained Hamas mbr. Khadar Mubarak, is interrogating him on suspicion he has information that could prevent an attack. The detention is revealed after Mubarak’s lawyer files a petition with the High Court, claiming that Mubarak is being tortured. (ITV 11/17 in WNC 11/19) (see 11/14)

PLO delegation led by Political Dept. head Faruq al-Qaddumi arrives in Beirut for 2-day talks on regional political developments. (RL 11/17, 11/19 in WNC 11/19)

Turkey inaugurates 2d bridge on the Turkish-Iraqi border at the al-Khubar border post. (Iraqi Television Network 11/17 in WNC 11/19)

18 NOVEMBER

Fmr. Israeli PM Shimon Peres, Arafat, the Labor party deny rumors that Peres advised Arafat to hold up the signing of a Hebron protocol, blame the PM’s office, Netanyahu for propagating the story. (IDF Radio, QY 11/18 in WNC 11/19; MM 11/19)

In Beirut, PLO’s Qaddumi, PA’s Faisal Hussein (in charge of the PA Jerusalem file) meet with Lebanese officials to discuss the political issues surrounding a solution to Palestinian refugees issue (e.g., settling refugees in Lebanon, considered by both sides to be undesirable; easing restrictions on refugees’ movement; continuing UNRWA operations). (al-Nahar, RMC 11/18 in WNC 11/20)

Israeli military court convicts 4 IDF soldiers of negligently shooting to death a Palestinian youth in the West Bank on 11/13/95, sentences them to 1 hr. in jail, fines them 1 agora (about ½ of a cent). (WP 11/19; WT 11/21; JP 11/30)

19 NOVEMBER

At the UN Security Council (UNSC) in New York, U.S. vetoed a 14-1 decision to reelect Secy. Gen. Boutros Boutros-Ghali to a 2d, 5-yr. term. This vote is expected to be the 1st in a series btwn. now and 1/97, when the final decision on the secy. gen. must be made. U.S. amb. to the UN Madeline Albright says the U.S. is prepared to use its veto indefinitely; if African nations want a secy. gen. fr. their continent, they should begin looking for another person. (MM 11/19; RE 11/19 in WNC 11/21; MM, WP, WT 11/20; RE 11/20, al-Dustur, al-Ra’a 11/21 in...


Israel's mayor of Jerusalem Ehud Olmert presents Housing M Meir Porush with a plan to build 2,200 housing units bwn. Pisgat Ze'ev and al-Za'im junction in a bid to link French Hill in East Jerusalem with Ma'ale Adumim. (IDF Radio 11/19 in WNC 11/20)

Some Jewish settler leaders say that they have received death threats fr. extremist settlers for suggesting that the shrine-like grave of Baruch Goldstein, who massacred 29 Arabs in Hebron 2/25/94, be dismantled. Goldstein's grave has become a pilgrimage site, with gardens, a fountain, and benches, where visitors meditate, read religious texts. (WT 11/20)

2 Israeli border policemen are arrested after Israeli television airs amateur videotape showing them beating Palestinian workers who were caught in Jerusalem without permits. Justice Min. says it is investigating another incident in which 3 border guards are accused of beating 8 Palestinians caught trying to cross into Israel nr. Qalqilya. (MM 11/19; CSM, WP, WT 11/20; WJW 11/28; JP 11/30)

Palestinian human rights activists Iyad Sarraj says that Israel has refused to issue him a visa to attend a conference in Norway, saying he must stay in Gaza for security reasons. (WT 11/20)

German court sentences Palestinian woman to 12 yr. in jail for participation in 1977 hijacking of a Lufthansa airliner in Mallorca, Spain. She was arrested in 1994 in Oslo and extradited to Germany. (WP 11/20)

In Jarju', s. Lebanon, an Israeli shell filled with nails hits a residential home, causing damage but no injuries. (RL 11/21 in WNC 11/22)

20 NOVEMBER


Speaker of the European Parliament, Klaus Hansach, addresses the PA Palestinian Council (PC) in Ramallah, calls for expediting the Israeli-PA negotiations. (PR 11/29)

Israel issues 14-page report alleging major violations of the Oslo accords by the PA, accusing PA leaders of deliberately stirring up the riots that followed the 9/24 tunnel opening. (WT 12/19)

U.S. Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA) meets with PM Netanyahu in Israel; heads to Damascus to deliver message to Pres. Asad, discuss obstacles to the peace process; returns to Israel to brief PM Netanyahu. According to Specter's aides, no new basis for resuming negotiations was offered by Israel. This is Specter's 2d such trip recently; on 8/28 he transmitted a letter fr. Netanyahu to Asad in Damascus. (SATN 11/20 in WNC 11/22; MM 11/21, 11/22)


21 NOVEMBER

In Jerusalem, Israel, PA hold "expanded" round of talks on Hebron. The 2 sides discuss the possibility of another Arafat-Netanyahu mtg. A dispute arises over the Rafah airport: Israel demands that the PA tear down the terminal, which already has been completed, and build it elsewhere. (RJ 11/21 in WNC 11/22; ITV 11/21, MA 11/22 in WNC 11/25; WJW 11/28)

In a press interview, Egyptian Pres. Mubarak says that Egypt "will not stand idly by" if Israel attacks Syria. Israel denounces the statement as provocative; Syria welcomes it. (al-Nahar 11/21 in WNC 11/26)

2 Palestinian boys are killed, 3 are wounded when they uncover a 1967-era Israeli land mine nr. Janin. PA-Israeli joint patrol searches the area, discovers 2 more mines. (PR 11/29)

22 NOVEMBER

At the weekly PA Executive Authority (EA), PLO Exec. Comm. meeting, the executive urges Palestinians to reclaim confiscated land in the West Bank, Gaza; advocates "popular confrontation" every time "Israeli bulldozers appear on Palestinian land"; vows to support such Palestinian resistance politically and financially. (MEI 12/6) (see 11/18)

Israeli Infrastructure M Ariel Sharon draws up plans for construction of 900 housing units for settlers on the Golan Heights as the 1st stage in a program to add 2,500 new residences over the next 3 yrs. Under this "Golan 2000" plan (as yet unapproved by the government), the buildings
would be considered extensions of existing settlements, though they would be at a distance fr. built-up areas. The settler population would increase fr. 16,000 to 25,000; currently, 18,000 Druze live on the Golan. (MM 11/22; YA 11/22 in WNC 11/25; NYT, WP 11/23; ITV 11/24 in WNC 11/26; MM 11/25; WJW 11/28; PR 11/29; JP 11/30; MEI 12/6)

23 NOVEMBER

Israel reinforces troops, equipment in s. Lebanon. (RL 11/23 in WNC 11/26)

24 NOVEMBER

The Multilateral Working Group on Refugees opens a 2-day mtg. in Petra. (RJ 11/24 in WNC 11/26; JT 11/27 in WNC 12/2) (see Peace Monitor for details)

In Amman, Jordan, PA hold meeting on economic relations, increasing trade b/wn. Jordan, self-rule areas. (JT 11/25 in WNC 11/26)

Saudi Arabian sources say investigators are working on the possibility that the 6/25 Khobar barracks bombing nr. Dhahran was carried out by a Hizballah faction, with the aid of Syrian military intelligence. (WT 11/25, 11/28; WP 12/1)

In s. Lebanon, 1 SLA mbr. is slightly injured in a clash with Hizballah. (RL 11/25 in WNC 11/27)

25 NOVEMBER

Arafat sends PM Netanyahu a letter urging Israel to halt settlement expansion. Netanyahu says he will forge ahead with settlement plans. (IDF Radio 11/25 in WNC 11/26; NYT 11/26; PR 12/6)

Syrian FM Faruq al-Shara' arrives in London for 4-day official visit. (IDF Radio 11/27, SANA 11/28 in WNC 12/2; MM 11/29)

Iraq accepts conditions set by the UN for implementing the oil-for-food agmt. Secy. Gen. Butros-Ghali must still give the formal go-ahead to implement the deal, which would allow Iraq to sell $2 b. worth of oil over 6 mos., with proceeds used to buy food, medicine. (MM 11/25; MM, WP, WT 11/26; WP 11/27; al-Ra'y 11/27 in WNC 11/29; INA 11/29 in WNC 12/2) (see 9/1)


26 NOVEMBER

PA, Israeli talks on Hebron resume. Last mtg. was 11/21. (ITV 11/26 in WNC 11/29; ITV 11/27 in WNC 12/2)

PA says it will boycott all multilateral talks, except those on refugees, in protest of Israel's lack of progress in bilateral negotiations, refusal to implement Oslo accord.

(YJT 11/23)

YESHA settlers' council calls on Israeli Pres. Ezer Weizman to lobby for a national unity government. Weizman stresses that he is not involved in politics. (ITV 11/26 in WNC 11/29; MA 11/29 in WNC 12/3)

In Hebron, 2 IDF soldiers are lightly wounded by a molotov cocktail. (ITV 11/26 in WNC 11/29)

Israeli judge releases 2 border policemen caught on videotape beating Palestini-ans (see 11/19), puts them under house arrest. (WT 11/27)

Ethiopia breaks ranks with African states supporting UN Secy. Gen. Butros-Ghali's reelection, says Africans should select an alternative candidate to avoid losing the position to a non-African. (WT 11/27, 12/3)

27 NOVEMBER

After Israeli jurists confirm that the existing Oslo agmts. give Israel overriding responsibility for security in the West Bank and Gaza that would permit the IDF to reenter any PA area, Israel drops its demand for written guarantees fr. the PA detailing IDF high pursuit rights in Hebron, a key sticking point of the talks. (MM 11/27; IDF Radio 11/27 in WNC 11/29; MM 11/28; IDF Radio 11/28 in WNC 12/2; CSM, MM 11/29)

JT reports that the PLO is setting up a new "superministry" that will replace the Tunis-based Department of Returnees Affairs and will have headquarters in Gaza and offices in Amman, Gaza, West Bank to deal with issues concerning Palestinian refugees. The main objectives of the superministry, which will not be tied to any PA ministry, are political mobilization of the refugees; improvement of refugees' living conditions; establishment and further development of bilateral ties with Arab and non-Arab countries, the UNRWA, the Multilateral Working Group on Refugees. (JT 11/27 in WNC 12/2)

Netanyahu adviser Gold arrives in London for talks with the British FMin. on ways of advancing regional cooperation.
(IDF Radio 11/27 in WNC 12/2; MM 11/29) (see 12/25)

**Israeli atty. gen. Mikhail Ben-Ya'ir** reports that **border police** routinely mistreat Palestinians, recommends that officers convicted of abuse be punished more harshly. (WT 11/28) (see 11/26)

**Turkey** announces that it has canceled its purchase of Cobra helicopters fr. the U.S., gives the U.S. no explanation. (ANATOLIA 11/27 in WNC 11/29)

**Israel** reinforces troops, equipment in s. **Lebanon**. Israeli naval vessels detain, search a German ship entering Tyre port. (RL 11/27 in WNC 11/29) (see 11/23)

The **Lebanese government** passes a law suspending the closure of all unlicensed **media** outlets, which was set for 11/30 (see 9/17). Under the law, unlicensed outlets may continue to broadcast apolitical news only until they are explicitly denied a license. (al-Nahar 11/28 in WNC 12/4)

### 28 NOVEMBER

**PC** concludes weekly 2-day session in Ramallah. Talks focus on **Jerusalem**. PC mbrs. complain that numerous ministries deal with issues related to Jerusalem, but without coordination; ask **Wa’af** to account for its use of donations to the city fr. diaspora Palestinians; suggest a Jerusalem ministry be established. (PR 12/6)

In Jericho, **Jordanian PM ‘Abd al-Karim Kabariti**, Arafat discuss peace process, bilateral ties. (RJ 11/28 in WNC 12/2)

**South Africa** calls on **Israel** to withdraw fr. Hebron; to take action to show that it intends to comply with existing peace agmts.; to refrain fr. provocative actions, such as the 9/24 tunnel opening. (South African Press Association 11/28 in WNC 12/2) (see 9/10)

Jewish **settlers** confiscate 120 acres of Palestinian land around Urtas village nr. Bethlehem. (PR 12/6)

### 29 NOVEMBER

**EU-Arab Parliamentary Dialogue** holds executive mtg. in advance of its full session 11/30–12/1, which will be the 1st in 8 yrs. The 14 executive delegates decide to lobby for the postponement of ratification of the Euro-Mediterranean agmt. bwn. Europe and Israel to send a signal to Israel that they are unhappy with its current policies toward the peace process. (JT 12/1 in WNC 12/3)

**Cameroon** seconds Ethiopia’s suggestion to find an alternative candidate for the **UN secy. gen.** position. (CSM, WT 12/3) (see 11/27)

25-mbr. unofficial **Jordanian delegation** travels to **Iraq** to discuss strengthening economic ties ahead of implementation of the UN oil-for-food deal. (JT 12/2 in WNC 12/3; RJ 12/5 in WNC 12/9) (see 11/25)

### 30 NOVEMBER

In **Hebron**, **Palestinians** clash with **settlers**, **IDF**. Several Palestinians are injured, 9 are arrested. (WT 12/1; ITV 12/1 in WNC 12/3; JP 12/7)

The **Jordanian Interior Min.** grants a license to operate to a new human rights organization, the **Jordanian Human Rights Society**, headed by Sulayman Suways. (al-Dustur 12/1 in WNC 12/3) (see 10/19)

**Iraq** sentences 4 Iraqis to death, 1 to life imprisonment for committing crimes against **Jordanians**. (al-Dustur 11/30 in WNC 12/3)

**IDF** kills 2 Hizballah mbrs. in **s. Lebanon**. (ITV 11/30, RL 12/1 in WNC 12/3)

### 1 DECEMBER

At the close of their mtg. in Amman, representatives of the 33 nations of the **Euro-Arab Parliamentary Dialogue** issue a declaration urging **Israel** to fulfill its commitments to the Oslo accords. (JT, JTV, RJ 12/1, JT 12/2 in WNC 12/3) (see 11/29)

In Cairo, **Arab League** holds emergency session on **Israeli** settlement activity, warns Israel that expanding **settlements** will endanger peacemaking; says existing settlements should be dismantled, but stops short of **Syria**’s demand that Arabs suspend relations with Israel. (RE, RMC 12/1 in WNC 12/3; MM, NYT, WP, WT 12/2; WT 12/4; PR 12/6)

**PM Netanyahu** meets with **Jordan Valley** settler leaders, says Jordan Valley is “inseparable from the State of Israel,” promises additional 470 housing units for the area, denounces **Arab League** statement. (MM, WP, WT 12/2; CSM 12/3)

In Cairo, **Arafat**briefs Pres. **Mubarak** on talks with **Israel**. (RE 12/2 in WNC 12/3)

**Jordanian**’s PM **Kabariti**, **Iraq’s** trade M discuss trade bwn. the two nations ahead of implementation of the UN oil-for-food agmt. (JTV 12/2 in WNC 12/4) (see 11/25) (RJ 12/9 in WNC 12/11)
2 DECEMBER

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) convenes in Lisbon. 54 mb.-states attend. PM Netanyahu says that Israel will expand settlement construction in the West Bank; refuses Arafat’s request to meet on sidelines of conference (Arafat does not attend mtg.); does meet with U.S. VP Al Gore, French pres. Jacques Chirac. (MM 12/2; ITV 12/2, IDF Radio 12/3 in WNC 12/4; MM 12/3, 12/5)

PA releases Hamas’s Shaykh Ahmad Nimr after a 9-mo. detention in Gaza Central Prison. (MEI, PR 12/13) (see 3/5)

Iranian FM ‘Ali Akbar Velayati arrives in Syria for talks on bilateral relations. Israel says it is concerned by the visit. (IRNA 12/2 in WNC 12/3; SATN 12/2, VIRI 12/3 in WNC 12/4; MA 12/5 in WNC 12/6)

3 DECEMBER

In Tel Aviv, U.S. Amb. Indyk meets a delegation of rabbis fr. the International Rabbinical Coalition for the Land of Israel, which requests the U.S. lift its pressure for evacuating settlers fr. Hebron. (ITV 12/5 in WNC 12/6)


Egyptian pres. Husni Mubarak says there is little more Egypt can do to help Butros-Ghali win a 2d term as UN secy. gen. if the U.S. continues to veto him, but Egypt will continue to support his bid. (NYT, WP 12/4) (see 11/29)

In Jericho, a PA jail guard shoots, kills prisoner Rashid Fityani, a suspected collaborator who was arrested 1/15/95 and never came to trial. PA Preventive Security Forces (PSF) says Fityani had been fighting with the guard. He is at least the 10th to die in PA custody. (NYT 12/6; PR 12/13; JP 12/14)

4 DECEMBER

PM Netanyahu says that PA, Israeli teams have exhausted their work; he and Arafat should hold a summit to wrap up the long-stalled talks on Hebron. (ITV 12/4 in WNC 12/6; MM 12/5; WP 12/6)

Israel, PA agree to set up a hot line in order to improve communications bwn. the Israeli Internal Security Min., the PSF in case of emergency. (IDF Radio 12/4 in WNC 12/6)

The World Bank loans Lebanon $35.7 m. for rehabilitation of the health sector. (RL 12/4 in WNC 12/6)

Israeli Atty. Gen. Mikhail Ben-Ya’ir announces his resignation, will step down 1/1/97. (MM 12/4; JP 12/14)

After the U.S. hints that it may drop its preference for an African candidate and begin considering non-Africans, UN Secy. Gen. Butros-Ghali suspends his candidacy for a 2d term, allowing other nominations to be made. (WP 12/5; CSM, MEI, WT 12/6)

5 DECEMBER

At weekly PC session, mbrs. threaten the executive with a no-confidence vote if it does not take firm action on behalf of prisoners, says the leadership is “not dealing seriously” with the prisoner issue in negotiations with Israel. (PR 12/13)

Responding to PM Netanyahu’s 12/4 suggestion, Arafat says that he is willing to take part in a bilateral summit to finalize terms of an Israeli redeployment in Hebron. (WP 12/6)

Jordan, PA hold trade talks in Amman; discuss holding future trilateral economic mtgs. with Israel on provisions for Jordanian exports to/imports fr. the PA self-rule areas. (RJ 12/5 in WNC 12/9)

IDF says that 17 mos. ago, after 5 mos. of preparation, a special forces unit named Egoz began operating against Hizballah in s. Lebanon. To date Egoz mbrs., chosen fr. Golani Brigade recruits, have killed 16 Hizballah fighters or officials. 2 Egoz mbrs. have been killed. (MM 12/5; JP 12/14)

In New York, donors pledge $133 m. to the annual UNRWA pledging conference for regular programs, operations for 1997. (UNRWA press release 12/9; JT 12/13 in WNC 12/16)

Pres. Clinton nominates Amb. to the UN Albright for secy. of state, Sen. William S. Cohen (R-ME) for secy. of defense, National Security Adviser (NSA) Anthony Lake for CIA dir. Dep. NSA Samuel Berger for NSA. (ITV 12/5, MA 12/6 in WNC 12/9; MM, NYT, WP, WT 12/6; VIRI 12/5, RMC 12/7, al-Dustur 12/8 in WNC 12/10; MM 12/9;
6 DECEMBER

PA negotiators say 3-way summit btw. Egypt, Israel, PA to clinch a deal on Hebron may occur 12/7, though no date has been set. Arafat, Netanyahuy say they are willing to meet. (WT 12/7; JP 12/14)

In Damascus, EU special envoy Miguel Angel Moratinos delivers Pres. Asad a message fr. PM Netanyahuy, saying that Israel is interested in resuming negotiations, easing tensions. (MM 12/6; SATN 12/6 in WNC 12/10; MEI 1/24)

In Karak, Jordanian PM Kabariti issues an unprecedented public apology to Iraq for accusing Iraq of instigating the 8/16-18 bread riots. (MEI 12/20)

4 Africans are officially nominated to succeed UN Secy. Gen. Boutros-Ghali; Mauritania's Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, Niger's Hamid Algabid, Ghana's Kofi Annan, Ivory Coast's Amara Essy. (NYT, WT 12/7)

IDF lifts ban prohibiting Israelis fr. entering the PA self-rule area of Bethlehem. The ban has been in place since the 9/24-28 clashes. (JP 12/14)

PA military court sentences Palestinian guard Assam Jalaita, who shot to death prisoner Fityani 12/3, to life in prison with hard labor. (NYT 12/7; JP 12/14)

U.S. Court of Appeals rules (8-2) that the Federal Election Commission (FEC) misapplied the federal campaign finance law in a 1992 decision that the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) did not fall under the FEC's jurisdiction, suggesting that AIPAC should register as a political action comm. (PAC) rather than a lobby. The FEC has 90 days to appeal the ruling to the Supreme Court, find another reason why AIPAC should not be registered as a PAC, or declare AIPAC a PAC. (WJW 12/12, 12/19)

7 DECEMBER

PA demands that Israel provide dates for further redeployment in the West Bank, release of Palestinian prisoners along with a Hebron protocol; open the central market and al-Shuhada Street in Hebron; allow PA police in Hebron joint patrol units to carry same weapons as the IDF; eliminate the term "hot pursuit" fr. any Hebron deal. (IDF Radio 12/8 in WNC 12/10)

In Cairo, Arafat briefs Mubarak on talks with Israel. (WT 12/7; RE 12/7 in WNC 12/10; PR 12/13)

In Gaza, Arafat briefs the Egyptian, Jordanian, PA delegations to the quadripartite refugee comm. on status of negotiations with Israel in preparation for full comm. mtg. 12/8. (PR 12/12)

 Israeli police arrest Hebron settler leader Noam Arnon over a disturbance inside the Tomb of the Patriarchs/al-Ibrahimi Mosque. (NYT 12/10)

Jordan, Turkey begin discussing details of implementing their military agmt., signed a decade ago; focus on technical exchanges, joint training. (al-Ra'i 12/7 in WNC 12/10)

Roadside bomb explodes in s. Lebanon, killing 1 IDF soldier, wounding 2. Hizbollah takes responsibility. Subsequent Israeli shelling wounds 6 civilians, incl. 1 child. (RL 12/7, 12/8 in WNC 12/10; NYT, WP 12/8; MM 12/9, 12/15)

8 DECEMBER

Egyptian, Jordanian, PA delegations to the quadripartite refugee comm. meet in Bethlehem. Israeli delegation refuses to attend. (PR 12/13) (see 12/2)

Israel says it is considering plan, approved by the Jerusalem planning commission, to build 132 houses for Jews in East Jerusalem. (CSM, MM 12/9; MM, NYT, WP 12/10; WT 12/11; CSM 12/12; PR 12/13; JP 12/21; MEI, PR 1/10)

9 DECEMBER

300 Palestinian students break into Islamic University of Hebron University, sealed by IDF since the 2-3/96 suicide bombings in Israel; say they will stay until the university is reopened. (CSM, NYT 12/10)

EU special envoy Moratinos meets with King Hussein in Amman. (RJ 12/9 in WNC 12/11; MEI 1/24)

Syrian PM Mahmoud Zubi begins 6-day visit to China. (WT 12/11)

UN approves implementation of oil-for-food deal for Iraq. (NYT, WP 12/10; JT 12/10 in WNC 12/12; MM 12/11) (see 11/25)

ILMG meets to discuss the IDF's attack on a Lebanese village 12/7 that left 6 civilians wounded. (MM 12/9; RL 12/9 in WNC 12/10; RL 12/9, RMC 12/10 in WNC 12/11)
10 DECEMBER

Israel says that, under a Hebron deal, PA policemen may operate in H2 as part of joint mobile units. (Hatzofe 12/10 in WNC 12/11)

Jordanian Information M Marwan Mu'ashir begins 5-day trip to Tel Aviv, emphasizes Jordan’s concern over Israeli settlement policy. (JT 12/10 in WNC 12/11; IDF Radio 12/11 in WNC 12/12; MEI 12/20)

The U.S. consul general says that Israel is threatening to revoke residency rights of Palestinian-Americans unless they give up their U.S. passports. The U.S. protests, says it knows of 60 cases when Israelis threatened Americans with the loss of their Jerusalem IDs. (WP 12/10; PR 12/20; JP 12/21)

Israel grants special entry permits to 120 Palestinian journalists accredited by the IGPO. (IGPO 12/10 in WNC 12/12)

PA allocates only $40,000 of the $70,000 necessary to stage the annual Christmas celebrations in Bethlehem. (WT 12/11, 12/23; PR 12/20)

In Beirut, EU special envoy Moratinos meets with Lebanese FM Buwayz. (RL 12/10 in WNC 12/11; MEI 1/24)

Iraq says it will give Turkey priority in exporting Iraqi oil now that the UN oil-for-food deal has been implemented. (INA 12/10 in WNC 12/11) (see 12/9)

ILMG continues discussions begun 12/9. (RMC 12/10 in WNC 12/11; RL 12/10 in WNC 12/12)

11 DECEMBER

In Tel Aviv, Israeli DM Mordechai briefs Jordanian Information M Marwan Mu'asher on negotiations with the PA. Mu'asher warns Israel on expanding settlements, raising fears of a military conflict with Syria. (ITV, JTV 12/11, IGPO, RJ 12/12 in WNC 12/13)

In Cairo, Netanyahu adviser Gold discusses peace process with Pres. Mubarak. (RE 12/11 in WNC 12/12)

Israeli Justice Min. defends Shin Bet’s use of moderate physical pressure in questioning Palestinians suspected of having knowledge of imminent anti-Israeli attacks; claims that 90 incidents (incl. 15 kidnapings of Israeli soldiers and civilians, 10 suicide bombings, 7 car bombings) have been averted over the past 2 yrs. as a result of such pressure. (IDF Radio 12/11 in WNC 12/12; MM 12/20) (see 11/14)

Two settlers are killed, 5 wounded in a drive-by shooting nr. Ramallah, which the IDF immediately seals off along with several surrounding villages. Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) claims responsibility as a response to Israel’s plans to build 132 Jewish houses in East Jerusalem (see 12/8). PA condemns the attack, saying it will give Israel a pretext to further delay negotiations. (MM 12/11; IDF Radio, ITV 12/11, RMC 12/12 in WNC 12/13; MM, NYT, WP, WT 12/12; MA 12/12 in WNC 12/16; WT 12/13; CSM 12/16; QY, YA 12/18 in WNC 12/19; MEI, PR 12/20; JP 12/21, 12/28; MEI 1/10; WJW 1/23)

12 DECEMBER

EU special envoy Moratinos meets with Israeli FM Levy. Moratinos and Arab, Israeli leaders have agreed to set up a “red phone” to Moratinos to be used in case of any misunderstandings, emergencies among the parties. (ITV, QY 12/12 in WNC 12/16; MEI 1/24)

Arab League issues statement strongly condemning Israel’s settlement activities, plans to build 132 units in East Jerusalem. (RE 12/12 in WNC 12/16) (see 12/11)

At the funeral for 2 settlers killed 12/11, Netanyahu vows to “deepen” Jewish settlements on the West Bank. PA says it has arrested 10 PFLP mbrs. in Ramallah. (MM 12/12; CSM, MM, NYT, WP, WT 12/13; PR 12/20; JP 12/28; MEI 1/10)

In Kiryat Gat in s. Israel, an Israeli shoots, kills a Palestinian worker fr. Gaza, whom he claims was trying to break into his home. Palestinians say the man, Samir Abu Shaqqa, was killed to avenge the death of 2 settlers 12/11. IDF detains the settler for questioning. (MM 12/12; NYT, WP 12/13; MM, PR 12/20; JP 12/21)

The World Bank approves a $120-m. loan to Jordan to support economic reforms. The variable-rate loan is for 17 yrs., incl. a 4-yr. grace period. (World Bank press release 12/12)

ILMG says that the IDF is responsible for the 12/7 attack on 2 s. Lebanon villages that left 6 Lebanese civilians wounded, for using internationally banned flechette shells, which spray steel darts. Israel rejects the decision. (RL 12/12 in WNC 12/13; IDF Radio 12/12 in WNC 12/16; MM, WP 12/13) (see 12/9)

Hot line bwn. U.S., Israeli defense chiefs begins operation. The new direct link is aimed at providing a “private and dedicated means for the defense chiefs of the
two countries to discuss matters of mutual interest." (JP 12/28)

In Baghdad, unidentified assailants use machine guns, grenades to attack car carrying Saddam Hussein's eldest son and heir apparent, Uday. The extent of Uday's injuries is not known, though he is alive. (al-Quds al-Arabi 1/6 in WNC 1/8; WP 1/29)

13 DECEMBER

Jordanian Information M Mu'asher meets with PM Netanyahu. (JT, RJ 12/13 in WNC 12/16)

Israeli cabinet reinstates large subsidies (incl. tax breaks, business grants) for West Bank settlers. The U.S. says the move is "troubling." "clearly complicates the peace process." (MM 12/13; MA 12/13 in WNC 12/16; IGPO 12/13, ITV 12/16 in WNC 12/17; LAWE, NYT, WP, WT 12/14; IGPO, WP 12/15; CSM, MM, WT 12/16; MEI, PR 12/20; JP 12/21)

In Gaza, 15,000 Palestinians attend antisettlement rally called by Hamas and approved by the PA. Hamas spokesman Mahmud Zahar announces that Hamas soon will open political offices in Gaza (with PA permission) as a transitional step for "greater participation in public life"; West Bank offices are planned. (NYT 12/14; CSM 12/16; ITV 12/17 in WNC 12/19; MEI, PR 12/20; al-Quds 12/20 in WNC 12/26; JP 12/21)

After France drops its threat to veto him, UNSC chooses Ghana's Annan, current undersecy. gen. for peacekeeping operations, for secy. gen. The full UN General Assembly (UNGA) is expected to officially elect him 12/17. (NYT, WP, WT 12/14; CSM 12/16; MEI 12/20) (see 12/6)

Katayusha rockets are fired fr. s. Lebanon into n. Israel, in first crossborder attack since the wide-scale Israeli-Lebanese fighting in 4/96. No one is injured, but a cow is killed. Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), Hizballah, PFLP, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP- GC) deny responsibility. (RL 12/13, RL, RMC 12/14, RL 12/15 in WNC 12/17; NYT, WP 12/14; RMC 12/15 in WNC 12/16; RL 12/15 in WNC 12/17; RL 12/16 in WNC 12/18; JP 12/21)

14 DECEMBER

Concerned over Israel's settlement policy, 8 fmr. high-ranking U.S. officials sent Netanyahu a letter, urging him "not to take unilateral actions that would preclude a meaningful settlement and a comprehensive and lasting peace." (MM, NYT 12/16; MM 12/17, 12/18; MEI 12/20; WJW 12/26) (see Doc. D2)

EU criticizes Israel's 12/13 decision to reinstate settlement benefits. (WT 12/15)

Germany, Jordan sign 3 agmts. under which Jordan will receive $6.8-m. worth of technical assistance over several yrs. (JT 12/14 in WNC 12/17)

IDF, Hizballah clash in s. Lebanon. 1 IDF soldier is wounded; 2 Hizballah mbrs. are killed. (ITV 12/14, RL 12/15 in WNC 12/17; NYT 12/16; WT 12/18)

15 DECEMBER

Netanyahu phones Arafat to ease tensions over settlement issue. Arafat and Netanyahu atty. Yitzhak Molho meet in the first high-level PA-Israeli contact in weeks. (ITV 12/15 in WNC 12/16; MM, WP 12/16; WP 12/17; MEI 12/20) (see 12/14)

PM Netanyahu says that his security services, specifically Shin Bet head Ami Ayalon, urged the opening of the archeological tunnel 9/24. Ayalon denies this. (ITV 12/15 in WNC 12/16; ITV 12/16, YA 12/17 in WNC 12/18; MM 12/17; HA, MA 12/18 in WNC 12/19)

PA security forces have detained 30 PFLP mbrs. since the 12/11 murder of 2 settlers. (MEI 12/20) (see 12/12)

PA military court sentences 2 Hamas mbrs. to death for killing 2 PA policemen a yr. ago. A 3d mbr. receives a life sentence for abetting the others. Since its establishment in 5/94, the PA has issued 12 death sentences of which 2 have been commuted, none carried out. (WT 12/16; PR 12/20)

16 DECEMBER

Israeli, PA talks on Hebron resume for 1st time in 9 days. (ITV 12/16 in WNC 12/18; PR 12/20)

PA negotiator Ereakat, Netanyahu adviser Molho meet briefly in Jerusalem to try to ease tensions that have built up since Israel's 12/13 decision to restore settler benefits. (CSM, WP, WT 12/17) (see 12/5)

Pres. Clinton criticizes Israel for planning to expand Jewish settlements in the West Bank, reinstating benefits to West Bank settlers. (MM, NYT, WP, WT 12/17; CSM, MM 12/18; NYT 12/19; IDF Radio, YA 12/19 in WNC 12/23; MEI 12/20; JP 12/28) (see 12/13)
IDF unseals Ramallah. (PR 12/20) (see 12/11)

In Washington, representatives of 29 nations (inc. Arab states, Brazil, Canada, the EU, Japan, the U.S.) pledge $3.2 b. toward the post-civil war reconstruction of Lebanon. The U.S. promises $20 m. over several yrs. (incl. $12 m. next yr. for education, environment). EU states pledge $1.5 b. (MM 12/16; RL 12/16 in WNC 12/17; MM, WP, WT 12/17; RL 12/17 in WNC 12/18; MM 12/18; al-Safir 12/18 in WNC 12/23; MEI 12/20; RL 12/23 in WNC 12/24; WJW 12/26; al-Safir 1/14 in WNC 1/17; CSM 1/15)

In Ankara, the 13th Iranian-Turkish joint economic commission session opens. (IRNA 12/16 in WNC 12/18, 12/19; MM 12/19)

ILMG meets at Naqura to consider a complaint by Israel regarding the launching of rockets into n. Israel 12/13. Although the Lebanese delegation does not believe katayushas actually were fired, the group concludes that at least 1 rocket, launched by an unknown party, landed in n. Israel. (RL 12/16 in WNC 12/17; RL 12/16 in WNC 12/18; RL 12/17 in WNC 12/19; MM 12/19; IGPO 12/26)

17 DECEMBER

Israeli government rejects Pres. Clinton's 12/16 comments on settlements; says they are unhelpful, especially during an impasse in the PA-israeli talks; vows to strengthen settlements. (MM 12/17; RE 12/17, IDF Radio, QY 12/18 in WNC 12/19; MM, WP, WT 12/18; WT 12/20)

UNGA appoints Ghana's Annan as Butros-Ghali's successor. He will become UN secy. gen. 1/1. In his last speech, Butros-Ghali criticizes the U.S., among others, for failing to pay its debts to the UN. (NYT, WT 12/18) (see 12/13)

18 DECEMBER

British PM John Major warns Israel not to inflame tensions by expanding settlements. (MM 12/19)

PA State Security Court convicts 3 PFLP mbrs. for killing 2 Jewish settlers 12/11. 2 are given life sentences; the 3d, the getaway driver, is given 15 yrs. PA says it will not extradite the 3 to Israel. (IDF Radio, YA 12/18 in WNC 12/19; MM, WP 12/19; JP 1/3)

N. Tabarja in n. Lebanon, unidentified gunmen open fire on a bus carrying Syrian workers, killing the driver, wounding 7 passengers. Lebanon, Syria claim Israel enlisted Lebanese Maronites to carry out the attack to create a rift betw. Lebanon, Syria. (MM 12/19; RL 12/21 in WNC 12/24; al-Thawra [Damascus] 12/28 in WNC 1/3; MEI 1/10)

In s. Lebanon, IDF fires on Hizballah mbrs. entering the self-declared security zone fr. the north, killing 3. (CSM 12/19)

19 DECEMBER

PM Netanyahu holds discussions with the FM, DM, national infrastructure M, defense officials regarding a document submitted several days ago by U.S. Amb. Indyk. The document constitutes a compromise document on Hebron, incorporating understandings reached so far btwn. Israel, the PA; includes clauses relating to continued implementation of Oslo, including Israeli commitment to a timetable for redeployment. Netanyahu says he has no intention of adhering to a timetable. (YA 12/19 in WNC 12/20)

Secy. of State Christopher says that special envoy Ross will soon return to the Middle East to "reenergize" the PA-Israeli talks; claims that the Israelis have made some concessions (unspecified) and that it is time for the PA to reciprocate. PA denies Israel has made concessions. (NYT 12/20)

Israel expresses concern that the PA will expand the Gaza port beyond the agreed upon plans to create a commercial, rather than a fishing, port, in which case Israel would have no control over entering and departing craft. (MA 12/20 in WNC 12/23)

Arafat has private audience with the Pope at the Vatican. (WT 12/20)

Israeli FM Levy meets with King Hussein, PM Kabariti in Jordan. Levy, who is the 1st Israeli official to visit since the 9/24 tunnel opening, inaugurates the new Israeli embassy in the Rabiya neighborhood of Amman. On arrival, he is met at the airport by a subcabinet-level official. (RJ 12/19 in WNC 12/20; JTV, RJ 12/19 in WNC 12/23; JP 12/28)

YESHA settlers' council ends 2-day convention; announces 3 "red lines" which, if crossed, will put an end to their support for Netanyahu. Action will be taken if Netanyahu does not go ahead with construction of housing units in East Jerusalem, Hebron; implements further redeployment fr. area C; does not allow "extensive and comprehensive" settlement. (IDF Radio 12/19 in WNC 12/23)
In Tripoli, Lebanon, an explosive device detonates near the regional Syrian intelligence headquarters, injuring 2 Syrian officers. Syria says that a civil-war era bomb detonator was accidentally burned with other trash, exploded. (MM 12/19; RL 12/19 in WNC 12/20; al-Sharq al-Awsat 12/19 in WNC 12/23; MA 12/22 in WNC 12/24) (see 12/18)

Iran’s Pres. Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, his 240-mbr. delegation begin 3-day visit to Turkey. Iran and Turkey will discuss economic, defense cooperation. (MM 12/19; Milliyet [Istanbul], VIRI 12/19, IRNA, VIRI 12/20 in WNC 12/23; MM 12/20; IRNA 12/20, VIRI 12/21, 12/22 in WNC 12/24)

20 DECEMBER

In Cairo, Arafat briefs Pres. Mubarak on talks with Israel. (WT 12/22; WJW 12/26)

Israel stops entry of a 40-ft. pine tree donated to the PA by Finland for the Christmas celebrations in Bethlehem (see 12/10), saying the tree could be diseased, “could affect all the trees in Israel.” (PR 2/20; CSM 12/23)

U.S. “strongly advises” Turkey not to improve its relations with Iran. (WP, WT 12/22) (see 12/19)

21 DECEMBER

U.S. special envoy Ross arrives in Israel, meets with PM Netanyahu, heads to Gaza for talks with Arafat. (ITV 12/21 in WNC 12/24; NYT, WP, WT 12/22; NYT 12/23; JP 12/28)

In Hebron, a scuffle b/wn. settlers, Palestinian children escalates into a melee b/wn. 100s of settlers, Palestinians. IDF soldiers intervene; hit, kick, punch Palestinians, leaving 1 unconscious; arrest 2 Palestinians. (NYT, WP, WT 12/22; JP 12/28)

A group of Christian churches, nongovernmental organizations, individuals forming the coalition of Churches for Middle East Peace takes out an ad in the NYT calling for a shared Jerusalem, assuring the rights of all religions in the city. (NYT 12/21)

Ignoring U.S. appeals (see 12/20), Turkey, Iran sign 7 trade accords, granting each other most favored nation trading status, increasing the annual volume of trade b/wn. the countries fr. $960 m. to $2 b., establishing a joint chamber of commerce, outlining maritime cooperation. Agnts. were drafted by the joint economic commission 12/16. (NYT, WP, WT 12/22; IRNA, VIRI 12/22, IRNA 12/23 in WNC 12/24; CSM, 12/24; WT 12/25)

22 DECEMBER

U.S. special envoy Ross holds intensive talks with Israeli, PA negotiators, offers some ideas (not specified) for bridging gaps. DM Mordechai says that Israeli will implement further redeployment immediately after a Hebron deal is reached, if Arafat promises to “wage an uncompromising war against terrorism.” (IDF Radio, ITV 12/22 in WNC 12/24; MM, NYT, WP 12/23)

In Lod, Israeli military court sentences 2 Palestinians to 2 consecutive life terms each for driving suicide bombers to the scenes of the 2-3/96 bombings in Israel. (WP, WT 12/23)

After 2 firebombs are thrown at a Jewish settlement without causing injuries, IDF imposes a curfew on Hebron; rounds up 100 Palestinians; then forces Palestinian stores to close, prompting riot. (CSM, WP, WT 12/23; WJW 12/26)

23 DECEMBER

U.S special envoy Ross meets again with Netanyahu, Arafat; arranges for each of them to be briefed separately on the status of talks by a joint delegation of PA, Israeli negotiators (incl. Abbas, Molho). (MM 12/23; RMC 12/23 in WNC 12/24; IDF Radio, ITV 12/23 in WNC 12/26; CSM, WT 12/24)

In Amman, PM Kabariti, PA Agriculture M ‘Abd al-Jawwad Salih discuss expanding Jordanian exports to the self-rule areas, bilateral cooperation on agriculture. (RJ 12/23 in WNC 12/26)

Israeli Housing Min. says it will soon market land on the Golan for the expansion of Qatzin’s settlement by 96 units. (MM 12/23)

Lebanese, Syrian officials say that 10s of Lebanese (perhaps as many as 200), many of whom are affiliated with the Christian opposition, have been detained for questioning regarding the 12/18 bus attack. Many already have been released. Coordinator for Israeli activities in Lebanon, Uri Lubrani, warns Syria that there will be retribution for the arrests. (MM 12/23; RL 12/26 in WNC 12/30; MM 1/3; al-Watan al-Arabi [Paris] 1/3 in WNC 1/14)

Jordanian government announces that a 10% cut in bread prices will be implemented in 1/97. (JT 12/24 in WNC 12/27) (see 8/16-18)
South Lebanon Army (SLA) expels a couple fr. their home in s. Lebanon to the n. after their son deserts the SLA. (RL 12/23 in WNC 12/26)

24 DECEMBER

At Erez crossing, Arafat, Netanyahu hold their longest face-to-face mtg. to date to discuss final issues preventing a Hebron deal. (IDF Radio, RMC 12/24 in WNC 12/27; NYT, WP, WT 12/25; CSM 12/27; MA 12/27 in WNC 12/30; JP 1/4) (see Peace Monitor for details)


Israel permits Islamic University of Hebron, which was closed in 3/96, to reopen within 2 days; lifts curfew on Hebron; reopens to Palestinian traffic a road in Gaza that runs by Netzarim settlement. (NYT 12/25; CSM, WT 12/27; JP 1/4) (see 11/24)

Iraqi oil M arrives in Turkey for 4-day visit to discuss boosting bilateral trade in light of the oil-for-food deal. (INA 12/24 in WNC 12/27; INA 12/26, 12/27 in WNC 12/30) (see 12/9)

In s. Lebanon, roadside bomb explodes, killing 2 mbrs. of the IDF's Egoz unit, wounding 2 Hizballah claims responsibility. In separate incident in s. Lebanon, a Lebanese child is wounded by IDF shelling. (ITV, QY, RL 12/24, ITV 12/25 in WNC 12/27; WP 12/25; WJW 1/23) (see 12/14)

25 DECEMBER

U.S. special envoy Ross returns to Washington, will head back to the Middle East region next wk. PA, Israeli negotiations continue talks on Hebron. (NYT, WP, WT 12/26; IDF Radio 12/26 in WNC 12/30)

In anticipation of the resumption of final status talks, PM Netanyahu's inner cabinet begins debate on the government's plan for a permanent arrangement with the PA. (IDF Radio 12/25 in WNC 12/27)

In Hebron, IDF, Israeli police block, arrest 20 Jewish settlers attempting to seize 2 vacant houses in the Arab section of town. 5 Palestinians are arrested after 3 firebombs are thrown at an IDF position in the city center. (NYT, WP, WT 12/26; MEI 1/10)

26 DECEMBER

IDF Dep. Chief of Staff Matan Vilnai says that the "working estimate for 1997 is that we can find ourselves in a military confrontation with Syria," probability of war is no longer low. (WT 12/27; IDF Radio, QY 12/26 in WNC 12/30; JP 1/4)

27 DECEMBER

PA, Israeli negotiators continue talks, say they hope to finalize a Hebron deal by 1/1, complete redeployment by 1/5. Debates continue on security control of Tomb of the Patriarchs/al-Ibrahimi Mosque; al-Shuhada Street; type of weapons to be used by PA police; the buffer zone bwn. H1, H2 areas; restrictions on Jewish construction. (IDF Radio, ITV 12/27 in WNC 12/30; WT 12/28, 12/29)

Two mos. after being suspended fr. the negotiations with the PA, Israeli coordinator of activities in the occupied territories Maj. Gen. Oren Shahor submits his resignation fr. the IDF. (IDF Radio, QY 12/27 in WNC 12/30; JP 1/4) (see Peace Monitor in JPS 102)

28 DECEMBER

PA says that a protocol on further redeployment, 2 U.S. letters of assurance will be attached to a Hebron agmt. Details still have to be worked out. (RMC 12/28 in WNC 12/31; JP 1/4)

Islamic University of Hebron reopens. (NYT, WT 12/29) (see 12/24)

At the 11th session of the Turkish-Iraqi Economic Comm., the 2 countries sign an agmt. to promote bilateral cooperation in industry, trade. (INA 12/28 in WNC 12/31) (see 12/24)

29 DECEMBER

PM Netanyahu rejects PA request to share control of Rachel's Tomb in Hebron. DM Mordechial, Arafat meet in Gaza to discuss Hebron redeployment. (IDF Radio, ITV 12/29 in WNC 12/31; CSM, WP, WT 12/30)

In Cairo, Damascus Declaration states (Egypt, Syria, 6 Gulf states) close their 14th semiannual 2-day mtg.; call on the U.S. to put financial pressure on Israel to stop settling Jews in occupied Arab territory. (WT 12/30; RE 12/29, IRNA 12/30 in WNC 12/31)

30 DECEMBER

Netanyahu's decision to move forward on an agmt. despite his hard-line views, inviting him to visit Washington soon. Israel's Shahak, PA's Abbas hold intense negotiations in Jerusalem. (NYT, WT 12/31; NYT, WP 1/1; MM 1/2)

Under pressure from PM Levy, Netanyahu agrees to submit any Hebron deal for cabinet approval. 7 of 18 cabinet mbrs. have said that they would veto an agmt. or abstain; 2 are uncertain of how they would vote. (WP 1/1; NYT 1/2)

In the largest protest against the PM since he was elected in 5/96, 100,000s of Israeli workers across the country, led by Histadrut labor federation, walk off their jobs to protest Netanyahu's plans to raise taxes, slash services, sell state companies. (YA 12/30 in WNC 12/31; WP, WT 12/31; MEI 1/10)

31 DECEMBER

PA, Israel continue negotiations on Hebron. PA wants Israel to commit to completing further redeployment by next fall, as set out in the Oslo II agmt. U.S. special envoy Ross meets separately with Arafat, Netanyahu. (NYT, WP, WT 1/1; PR 1/3)

For 2d time in 1 wk., Jewish settlers break into Palestinian market area in Hebron, claim it as Jewish property. Israeli police arrest 15 settlers, eject them fr. the site. (WP, WT 1/1)

Bomb explodes on Damascus bus, killing 11, wounding 44. Citing Lubran's statements 12/23, Syria accuses Israel of planting the device. U.S. calls charge "wild and irresponsible," demands proof of Israel's complicity. (RMC 1/2 in WNC 1/3; MBC, RJ, SATN 1/2, RMC 1/3 in WNC 1/6; MM, NYT, WT 1/3; ITV, RMC 1/4, al-Dustur 1/5; JT, QPAR, RJ, SATN 1/6 in WNC 1/7; al-Urdun 1/6 in WNC 1/16; MM 1/7; SANA 1/8 in WNC 1/9; MM, WJW 1/9; MEI 1/10; JP 1/11; NYT 1/28) (see 12/19)

The mandate for Operation Provide Comfort, set up by the U.S. and its allies after the Gulf War to protect the Kurds in n. Iraq, expires. Turkish parliament passes an extension of the mandate, though the title "Operation Provide Comfort" will no longer be used in order to stress that the project now is largely American, rather than international. France ceases participation, stating that the UN oil-for-food deal provides adequately for aid distribution in n. Iraq. (MEI 1/10)

1 JANUARY

Intending, in his words, to kill "Israel-haters" and prevent a Hebron deal, off-duty IDF soldier Noam Friedman opens fire on Palestinians in Hebron marketplace, wounding 7, precipitating clashes b/w settlers, Palestinians. IDF injures 9 Palestinians in trying to break up protests, places curfew on the city. Planned mtg. b/w Netanyahu, Arafat is postponed, but negotiations resume at home of U.S. Amb. to Israel Martin Indyk. Pres. Clinton phones Arafat, encourages him to conclude an agmt. before the situation in Hebron worsens. (IDF Radio, JTV, RE, RJ 1/1, MA, al-Ra'i 1/2 in WNC 1/3; IDF Radio 1/1 in WNC 1/6; MM, NYT, WP, WT 1/2; CSM, PR 1/3; WJW 1/9; MEI 1/10; JP 1/11; ITV 1/13 in WNC 1/15)

The Jerusalem-based Palestinian newspaper al-Nahar publishes its last issue, closes for financial reasons. (WT 1/2; PR 1/10)

2 JANUARY

The PA hardens its position on Hebron deal after 1/1 shooting, demands Israeli commit to a deadline for withdrawing troops fr. rural West Bank areas. (HA, IDF Radio, QY 1/2 in WNC 1/6; CSM, WT 1/3; NYT 1/4; JP 1/11)

Israeli Internal Security M Avigdor Kahalani warns that "the Jews in Hebron must be protected. They are in great danger, despite Noam Freedman's shooting spree." (MEI 1/10) (see 1/1)

Israeli police detain IDF soldier Yuval Jibili on suspicion that he knew of Friedman's plans to attack the Hebron market 1/1. IDF reinforces troops in the city. (NYT, WT 1/3; JP 1/11)

The Washington bureau of the London-based Saudi daily al-Hayat receives 5 terror bombs, which are detected before they explode. 2 similar bombs are sent to the federal penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kansas, where Jordanian Muhammad Salameh is serving time for his part in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. Though all bombs are postmarked Alexandria, Egypt, authorities believe that they were mailed domestically. (MM, WP, WT 1/3; MBC 1/3 in WNC 1/7; SA 1/8 in WNC 1/9; MEI 1/10)

3 JANUARY

Trying to appease his right-wing cabinet ministers in advance of a vote on a Hebron deal, Netanyahu says that he will not give the PA a timetable for further redeployment,
but only a date on which redeployment would begin. PA says it will not sign a deal without a timetable. 10 of the 18 cabinet mbrs. now say they are considering vetoing or abstaining fr. a vote on a Hebron deal. (see 12/30). (IDF Radio 1/3 in WNC 1/6; NYT, WP, WT 1/4)

**Israel Police** release Yuval Jibili. (NYT 1/4) (see 1/2)

**Syria** says that it is “astonished” by the insensitivity of U.S. remarks on the 12/31 bus bombing. U.S. then issues statement saying that it deplores the attack. (RMC 1/3 in WNC 1/6; WP, WT 1/4; SANA 1/4 in WNC 1/7; MM, WT 1/7; MEI 1/10)

In **S. Lebanon, Hizballah** attacks an IDF position, wounding 2. (RL 1/3 in WNC 1/7) A 3d letter bomb arrives at the federal penitentiary in Leavenworth, is detected before it is opened. (WP 1/4, 1/8; MEI 1/10) (see 1/2)

**4 JANUARY**

U.S. special envoy Ross meets separately with Arafat, Netanyahu. (NYT, WT 1/5)

**Al-Hayat’s** Riyadh bureau receives, defuses a letter bomb similar to those received in the U.S. (see 1/2–3). (NYT 1/14; WT 1/15)

**5 JANUARY**

After meeting secretly through the night at Erezn, Arafat, Netanyahu say that they are close to solidifying a Hebron deal. Mbr. of U.S. diplomatic team says that lower level negotiations have reached the end of their utility—if a deal is to be made, the leaders must meet; that Netanyahu is playing up fear of losing his cabinet majority over the deal (especially with the U.S.) to stave off PA demands. (IGPO 1/5; RMC 1/5 in WNC 1/7; CSM, MM, WP, WT 1/6; CSM; MEI 1/10)

IDF, Hizballah clash in **S. Lebanon**, leaving 3 IDF soldiers wounded. (NYT 1/6)

**6 JANUARY**

U.S. special envoy Ross spends the day shuttling brwn. Arafat in Bethlehem, Netanyahu in Jerusalem, trying to bridge the gap on further redeployment. (Israel says that it wants to postpone the 3d and final stage of further redeployment fr. the West Bank until spring 1999.) All parties now cite 1/10, the beginning of Ramadan, as their target date for concluding a Hebron agmt. (IDF Radio, ITV 1/6 in WNC 1/7; MA 1/6, al-Quds 1/7 in WNC 1/9; MM, NYT, WP 1/7; CSM, MM, WT 1/8; WP 1/9; MEI, MM, PR 1/10; JP 1/18) (see Peace Monitor for details)

**7 JANUARY**

Israeli amb. to the U.S. Ben-Eliasser accuses Egypt of encouraging the PA to stall on a Hebron deal, pressing other Arab states not to normalize relations with Israel. (WT 1/9)

Syria announces that Pres. Asad has undergone successful prostate surgery, will resume official duties in a few days. (SATN 1/7 in WNC 1/9; WP 1/8; RJ 1/9 in WNC 1/13; NYT 1/28)

IDF eases closure on the West Bank, Gaza, increasing fr. 3,420 to 4,520 the number of Palestinian merchants allowed in to Israel; allowing 250 Gaza merchants into the West Bank and vice versa; increasing fr. 150 to 200 the number of Gaza PA officials allowed into the West Bank; allowing 50 Gaza trucks into Israel. (IGPO 1/7; PR 1/17)

14th session of the **Iranian-Turkish Joint Security Commission** opens in Tehran. Discussion focuses on expanding bilateral ties. (IRNA 1/7 in WNC 1/8)

Seyc. of State Christopher tells UN Secy. Gen. Annan that the U.S. is interested in paying its $1.3-b. debt to the UN. Rep. Bill Richardson (D-NM) is nominated to replace outgoing Amb. to the UN Albright. (NYT, WT 1/8) (see 12/5)

**8 JANUARY**

As a “compromise” to Israel’s 1/6 propos-, Netanyahu suggests delaying completion of further redeployment until 5/98. Arafat opposes the suggestion. Under Oslo II, all 3 stages of further redeployment were to be completed by 9/97. (MM, WP, WT 1/9; WP 1/11; JP 1/18)

A katayusha rocket fired fr. S. Lebanon hits n. Israel, causing no injuries or damage. No one claims responsibility for the act. In 2 separate incidents in S. Lebanon, 1 IDF soldier is killed, 8 (incl. 3 Egoz mbrs.) are wounded. (RL 1/8 in WNC 1/9; ITV, RL 1/8 in WNC 1/10; MM, NYT, WP 1/9; RL 1/10 in WNC 1/13; RMC 1/10 in WNC 1/14; MEI 1/24)

ILMG ends 2 days of discussions. (RL 1/8 in WNC 1/9; al-Safir 1/9 in WNC 1/14)

**9 JANUARY**

Two pipe bombs explode in Tel Aviv, wounding 13 Israelis. No one takes responsibility. PM Netanyahu breaks off a mg. with
U.S. special envoy Ross; says that if the bombing proves to have been staged fr. the PA areas, he would suspend negotiations, respond with “great severity.” Israeli police say that bombs were small, unsophisticated; they have not determined a motive for the attack. (IDF Radio, ITV, QY 1/9 in WNC 1/13; MM, NYT, WP, WT 1/10; JP 1/18)

IDF says that the number of attacks on Israeli troops in s. Lebanon dropped significantly in 1996 (414 attacks), compared to 1995 (584 attacks). (MA 1/9 in WNC 1/10)

3 Amal mbrs., 1 IDF soldier are killed in clash in s. Lebanon. (RL 1/9 in WNC 1/10; CSM 1/10)

10 JANUARY

Hamas holds rally at Birzeit University to mark the 1996 Yahya Ayyash assassination. (ITV 1/10 in WNC 1/14; WT 1/12)

The Israeli cabinet approves Roni Bar-On’s nomination as atty. gen. Labor places an injunction against the appointment, saying Bar-On, an obscure Jerusalem lawyer known as a Likud activist, was selected for political reasons, not his abilities. (ITV 1/10 in WNC 1/14; JP 1/18; MEI 2/7) (see 12/4)

A Saudi Arabian Islamist group, the Islamic Movement for Change, says it carried out the Damascus bus bombing 1/2 in retaliation for Syria’s execution of a mbr. of its group for participation in the 6/25/96 Kobar barrack bombing. Syria discounts the claim. (MM 1/10; AFP 1/10 in WNC 1/13; al-Nahar 1/10 in WNC 1/16; NYT 1/11; WT 1/12)

ILMG meets to discuss an Israeli complaint concerning the launching of a rocket into n. Israel 1/8; issues statement saying that 1 rocket was fired in violation of the 4/96 understanding, but that the group could not determine who fired it. (RMC 1/10 in WNC 1/13; RL 1/11 in WNC 1/14; IGPO 1/12) (see 12/16)

11 JANUARY

In Cairo, Pres. Mubarak meets separately with Arafat, U.S. special envoy Ross. Arafat then returns to Gaza to meet with the EA. (RE 1/11 in WNC 1/14; NYT, WP 1/12; JP 1/18)

Jordan’s King Hussein phones Egyptian pres. Mubarak, Israeli PM Netanyahu, U.S. secy. of state Christopher to discuss the Israeli-Palestinian track. (RJ 1/11 in WNC 1/14)

In s. Lebanon, an SLA patrol triggers a land mine, wounding 1 mbr. (RL 1/11 in WNC 1/14)

Al-Hayat’s Riyadh bureau receives, defuses a 2d letter bomb. (NYT 1/14; WT 1/15) (see 1/4)

12 JANUARY

Jordan’s King Hussein travels to Gaza, Israel to try to break deadlock in PA-Israeli talks. As a result, U.S. envoy Ross, who had planned to return to Washington today because no agmt. seemed forthcoming, decides to stay. After an evening of talks, Arafat, Netanyahu agree to a compromise on further redeployment suggested by the king, opening the way for a Hebron deal to be signed. (IDF Radio, ITV, JTV, RJ, RMC 1/12, IDF Radio, QY, RJ 1/13 in WNC 1/14; CSM, MM, NYT, WP, WT 1/13; CSM, MM 1/14; VOA 1/14 in WNC 1/15; WT 1/16; JTV 1/16 in WNC 1/21; PR 1/17; al-Nahar 1/21 in WNC 1/24; MEI 1/24) (see Peace Monitor for details)

12 hrs. after assuming his post, Att. Gen. Bar-On resigns amid rumors that he was appointed in exchange for a promise to arrange a plea bargain that would end the corruption trial of one of PM Netanyahu’s allies, fmr. Interior M Arye Deri. (MM 1/13; NYT 1/24; JP 1/25; NYT 1/27; MEI 3/7) (see 1/10)

Syrian-Lebanese Joint Higher Council signs 3 agmts. on joint border offices and facilitating transportation bwn. the 2 countries, taxation, encouraging investment. (RMC 1/12 in WNC 1/14)

13 JANUARY

In Jerusalem, PA, Israeli negotiators review drafts of possible Hebron protocol to work out final details. Both sides say there are no more substantive differences bwn. them. The talks are interrupted once by a bomb threat. (MM 1/13; IDF Radio 1/13 in WNC 1/14; ITV 1/13 in WNC 1/15; NYT, WP, WT 1/14)

PM Netanyahu tells his cabinet ministers that the main achievement of the Hebron protocol draft, as it stands, is that most of the West Bank territory will remain under Israel’s control after further redeployment is completed, Israel will determine the amount of land to be returned under the 3 stages. (ITV 1/13 in WNC 1/15)

In Amman, PM Karabiti, Iraqi dep. PM Tariq Aziz discuss bilateral relations, partic-
ularly economics and trade. (RJ 1/13 in WNC 1/14) (see 12/28)

Two mail clerks at the London office of al-Hayat are injured when 1 of 4 letter bombs addressed to the office explodes. In New York, 4 similar devices sent to the paper's UN bureau are found, disarmed. (MM, NYT, WP, WT 1/14; CSM, MM, NYT 1/15)

14 JANUARY

After several hours of talks btwn. Arafat, Netanyahu at Erez, the PA, Israeli chief negotiators initial a Hebron protocol with attached U.S. "Note for the Record," "Agreed Minute." Letters of assurance to Arafat, Netanyahu fr. Secy. of State Christopher are also exchanged. (MM 1/14; IDF Radio, RJ 1/14 in WNC 1/15; al-Quds al-Arabi 1/14, AFP, IDF Radio, QY, RE, RJ, RL, YA 1/15 in WNC 1/16; CSM, MM, NYT, WP, WT 1/15; CSM, WJW 1/16; NYT, PR 1/17; WJW 1/23; MEI 1/24) (see Special Document File for texts, Peace Monitor for details)

YESHA settlers' council holds an emergency session to discuss the Hebron protocol, resolve to start treating Netanyahu's government as a political foe. (WP 1/15; WJW 1/16)

IDF begins forced transfer of bedouin fr. their homes nr. Jahalin, West Bank, in preparation for expansion of Ma'ale Adumim settlement. Some 45 bedouin families have lived on the site for 40 yrs. They are being sent to a new site outside of Jerusalem nr. the municipal garbage dump. They will be given freight containers as alternative housing. (NYT 1/15, WJW 1/16; PR 1/31; LAWE 2/13)

Mtg. of the Jordan Rift Valley Development Comm. opens at the Dead Sea. (JT 1/15 in WNC 1/23)

In s. Lebanon, an SLA mbr. is injured when he sets off an explosive device planted along a road. (RL 1/15 in WNC 1/16)

15 JANUARY

In Gaza, the EA, PLO Exec. Comm., PC ratify the Hebron protocol. (NYT, WP, WT 1/16; PR 1/24)

Israeli cabinet begins debate on Hebron protocol. (ITV 1/15 in WNC 1/17)

PA police begin entering Hebron. Redevelopment should be completed by 1/17. (NYT 1/15, 1/16)

Netanyahu policy adviser Bar Ilan says that he believes that, under the new Hebron agmt., Israel could stay in control of 50% of the West Bank after the 3d stage of further redeployment. (WT 1/16)

Jordanian delegation arrives in Baghdad for talks with Iraq on an economic agmt. encompassing an oil deal, trade protocol. (RJ 1/15 in WNC 1/17)

The U.S. warns Pres. Nelson Mandela that it might withdraw millions of dollars in aid to South Africa if Mandela approves a $641-m. arms sale to Syria. Mandela angrily rejects the warning, noting that 3 EU states are trying to sell Syria the same equipment, and the U.S. has not issued warnings to them. Israel summons the South African amb. to express its "deep concern" over the sale. (South Africa Radio [Johannesburg] 1/15 in WNC 1/15; IGPO 1/15 in WNC 1/17; al-Safir 1/15, SANA in WNC 1/21; MM, NYT, WT 1/16)

16 JANUARY

After 12 hrs. of debate, the Israeli cabinet approves (11-7) the Hebron agmt. Halfway into the debate, Netanyahu is forced to call a recess amid sudden confusion over U.S. guarantees, sparked by an Israeli news broadcast quoting an unidentified U.S. official as saying that Israel could not unilaterally decide how much of the West Bank it would turn over to the PA. State Dept. issues statement that "further redeployment phases are issues for implementation by Israel rather than issues for negotiation with the Palestinians." (MM, NYT, WJW, WP, WT 1/16; ITV 1/16 in WNC 1/17; CSM, NYT, WT 1/17; MEI 1/24) (see Special Document File for text, Peace Monitor for details)

Later in the day, the Knesset approves (87-17, with 1 abstention, 15 absent) the Hebron agmt. (MM 1/16; MM, NYT, WP, WT 1/17)

IDF begins redeploying in Hebron. (MM 1/16; CSM, NYT, WP, WT 1/17)

U.S. special envoy Ross returns to the U.S. (WT 1/17; MEI 1/24)

17 JANUARY

IDF completes redeployment in Hebron. Palestinians throw stones, produce at IDF soldiers left to guard the central market. Israel, PA police quickly intervene to halt the demonstration. (MM 1/17; NYT, WP, WT 1/18; WT 1/19; MEI, PR 1/24; JP 1/25)

In Cairo, Pres. Mubarak briefs Syrian VP Khaddam, FM Shara' on the Hebron protocol; discusses ideas for advancing the peace
process on the Syrian, Lebanese tracks. (RMC 1/17 in WNC 1/17)

The U.S. renews for 6 mos. the travel ban on Lebanon. (WP 1/18; RL 1/19 in WNC 1/22)

18 JANUARY

In Beirut, Syrian officials arrest a Jordanian national of Palestinian descent, Dirar al-Karmi, for attacking a Syrian bus 12/18, take him to Damascus. (WT 1/19; MM 1/20; al-Dustur 1/20, 1/21 in WNC 1/22; RL 1/21 in WNC 1/23)

At the end of the Iraqi-Jordanian Joint Comm. mtg. in Baghdad, Jordan, Iraq initial the minutes of a joint economic, trade, oil cooperation accord. (INA 1/18, 1/19 in WNC 1/22; MM 1/20, al-Ra'i 1/22 in WNC 1/23; RMC 1/26 in WNC 1/28) (see 1/15, Peace Monitor for details)

19 JANUARY

Arafat visits Hebron. 60,000 Palestinians welcome him. Later, he meets with Hebron's Hamas leaders. (MM, NYT, WP, WT 1/20; al-Quds 1/20 in WNC 1/23; WJW 1/23; MEI 1/24)

Palestine National Council authorizes its Legal Comm. to amend the PLO charter. (PR 1/24)

Palestinian sources in 'Ayn al-Hilwa refugee camp in s. Lebanon say that 3 high-ranking Fatah mbrs., associated with anti-Arafat faction leader Col. Munir Makdah, have been assassinated in the past wk. They are Ahmad Ayyub, Khalil Ward, and Abu al-'Asal. (AFP, RMC 1/19 in WNC 1/22) (see 4/16/96)

France refuses Iraqi pres. Saddam Hussein's request to transfer his son Uday to Paris for treatment. (MM 1/20) (see 12/12)

20 JANUARY

The Senate Foreign Relations Comm. votes unanimously to confirm Albright as secy. of state. The full Senate will vote on her nomination 1/22. (WP 1/21) (see 12/5)

21 JANUARY

Israel, PA sign new agmt. on the Temporary International Presence in Hebron. (IGPO 1/21, 1/23) (see Peace Monitor for details)

Israel, Jordan, the PA begin a joint tourism campaign. (MM 1/21; NYT 1/24) (see Peace Monitor in JPS 102)

22 JANUARY

In Cairo, Arafat says that after the interim period, the PA could unilaterally declare a Palestinian state, without Israeli permission. (ITV, SA 1/22 in WNC 1/24; MM 1/23)

PM Netanyahu says that he has offered to resume negotiations with Syria, but Syria has not responded. Israeli PM Levy publicly appeals to Syria to resume peace talks. (MM 1/22; IDF Radio, SA 1/22 in WNC 1/23; WT 1/23)

After 3 mos. of discussion, a group of Likud, Labor legislators (led by MKs Michael Eytan and Yossi Beilin, respectively) sign a document entitled "National Agmt. Regarding the Negotiations on the Permanent Settlement with the Palestinians." (NYT 1/26; MM, WP 1/27; MM 1/28; SA 1/28 in WNC 1/29; JTJ 1/31 in WNC 2/6; MM 2/3; PR 2/7) (see Doc. B2)

South Africa's cabinet delays the $650-m. arms sale to Syria, says it will consult the U.S. before making a final decision. (NYT, WP 1/23; WT 1/24; MEI 2/7) (see 1/15)

The full Senate confirms (99-0) Albright as secy. of state. She chooses Thomas Pickering as her undersecy. for political affairs, Stuart Eizenstat as her undersecy. for economic affairs. Strobe Talbott will remain dep. secy. of state. (NYT, WP 1/23) (see 1/20)

23 JANUARY

PM Netanyahu says that if Arafat unilaterally declares a Palestinian state, Israel will retake zone B areas. (MM 1/23; IDF Radio 1/23 in WNC 1/24) (see 1/22)

IDF demolishes Palestinian home nr. Janin. (LAWE 2/13)

The IDF begins collecting taxes on cars fr. Lebanese citizens in s. Lebanon. The tax ranges fr. $7 to $30, depending upon the size of the car. (RL 1/23 in WNC 11/24)

Albright is sworn in as secy. of state. (NYT, WP, WT 1/24)

In Washington, UN Secy. Gen. Annan meets with Pres. Clinton. Congress. Clinton vows to work with Congress to pay all of the U.S. $1.3-b. debt to the UN, if Annan pushes UN reform. (NYT, WP, WT 1/24)

24 JANUARY

PM Netanyahu says he is willing to have the police investigate his appointment of Bar-On as atty. gen. New allegations suggest that, during the cabinet debate on the Hebron protocol (1/16), Arye Deri's Shas party
conditioned its approval of the protocol on Bar-On’s appointment (see 1/12). (NYT 1/25; WP 1/26; NYT, WP, WT 1/27; MEH 2/7)

After receiving criticism fr. Jews for signing the Churches for Middle East Peace ad (see 12/21), the National Council of Churches, one of the nation’s most influential Christian organizations, says it will revise its Middle East policy in consultation with American Jewish leaders. (WP 1/25)

25 JANUARY

PA Planning M Shaath says that 8 PA-Israeli joint comms. will resume simultaneous mtgs. next wk. (al-Quds 1/25 in WNC 1/28)

In Damascus, Diraz al-Karmi, arrested 1/18 in connection with the 12/18 attack on a Syrian bus in Lebanon, is released. (RJ 1/26 in WNC 1/28; al-Dustur 2/1 in WNC 2/6)

26 JANUARY

Syrian VP Khaddam, FM Shara† arrive in Saudi Arabia on the first leg of a Gulf tour to urge the Gulf states to lobby the U.S. in support of Syria’s negotiating position toward Israel, to not move ahead with normalization. (MM 1/27; AFP, SA 1/27 in WNC 1/29)

Israel says that multilateral talks will resume at a steering comm. mtg. that will be held in Moscow in 4/97. (IDF Radio 1/26 in WNC 1/28; MM 1/31)

In Israel, FM Levy meets with Russian dep. FM Viktor Posuvalyuk. (IDF Radio 1/26 in WNC 1/28) (see Peace Monitor for details)

In Israel, EU special envoy Moratinos meets with Israeli FM Levy. (AFP 1/27 in WNC 1/28)

The Israeli Ministerial Comm. on Jerusalem Affairs grants the Jerusalem Municipalities a $40-m. budget supplement for building infrastructure (e.g., roads, sewage, and water systems) to connect East and West Jerusalem. The PA says such construction would prejudice the outcome of final status negotiation. The Prime Minister’s Office declares that Jerusalem is, will always be united under Israeli sovereignty; the grant is meant “to align this declaration with reality.” (IDF Radio 1/26 in WNC 1/28)

Israeli police open investigation into Bar-On’s appointment as atty. gen. (NYT, WP, WT 1/27; MM 1/20; WT 2/3; MEH 2/7) (see 1/24)

In Amman, King Hussein undergoes orthoscopic surgery on both knees. (RJ 1/26 in WNC 1/28; JTV 1/27 in WNC 1/29; JP 2/15)

27 JANUARY

Syrian VP Khaddam, FM Shara† leave Saudi Arabia for Kuwait. After mtgs. there, they return to Damascus to meet with EU special envoy Moratinos. Shara* denies that Moratinos brought any new Israeli proposals for restarting negotiations. (MM 1/27; AFP 1/27 in WNC 1/28; AFP, SANA 1/27 in WNC 1/29; MM 1/28)

IDF forcibly removes 30 bedouin fr. Jahalin; bulldozes their homes; trucks their belongings, animals to a new site outside Jerusalem. 10 of the 30 are hospitalized with injuries sustained in the move. (WP 1/28; PR 1/31) (see 1/14)

Israeli jurist and negotiator Eliyakim Rubinstein is appointed atty. gen. (MM 1/27) (see 1/26)

28 JANUARY

In Jerusalem, PA negotiator Erakat, Netanyahu adviser Molho exchange lists of negotiators on the 8 subcomms. that will continue talks on implementing issues outstanding fr. Oslo II. (ITV 1/28 in WNC 1/30; PR 1/31) (see Peace Monitor for details)

Arafat makes brief trip to Jordan to meet with King Hussein. (RJ 1/28 in WNC 1/29; JTV 1/28 in WNC 1/30)

Syrian VP Khaddam, FM Shara† arrive in the UAE for talks with Pres. Shaykh Zayid bin Sultan al-Nahayat. (MM 1/29, SATN 1/29 in WNC 1/30)

Lawyers for Hamas political leader Musa Abu Marzuq say he is dropping his extradition fight in order to emphasize unjust, illegal Israeli and U.S. judicial practices. (MM 1/28; WP, WT 1/29; WP 1/30; AFP, RMC 1/30 in WNC 1/31; PR 1/31; CSM 2/4; WJW 2/6; MEH 2/7) (see 10/9/96)

IDF demolishes 4 Palestinian homes nr. Ramallah, in area C, for having no permits. (LAWE 2/13) (see 1/23)

Chief of the U.S. Central Command Gen. J.H. Binford Peay says that Iraqi pres. Saddam Hussein has placed his 1st wife, Sajida Talfah, and 2 daughters under house arrest, because of disputes over the murder of Saddam’s 2 sons-in-law (2/23/96). Saddam’s son Uday may lose a leg, be paralyzed as a result of the 12/12 assassination attempt. 600 people, incl. 20 senior
military officers, have been arrested in connection with the shooting. (WP 1/29; AFP 2/1 in WNC 2/4; WT 2/5; WP 2/10) (see 1/19)

29 JANUARY

In Jerusalem, PA-Israeli security comm. holds 1st mtg. since the signing of the Hebron protocol. (al-Ittihad 1/31 in WNC 2/3) (see Peace Monitor for details)

In Damascus, UN special envoy Mortani- nos holds 2d round of talks with Pres. Asad, saying Asad is looking for a “goodwill gesture” from Israel, clarification on what Israeli FM Levy meant by saying (1/22) that Israel was ready to resume talks on the basis of UN Res. 242 and the Madrid principles. (MM 1/30; ITV 2/3 in WNC 2/6)

Syrian VP Khaddam, FM Shara arrive in Bahrain for 2-day visit. (WAKH [Manama] 1/28 in WNC 1/29)

Israeli Infrastructure M Sharon says that Israel should demand that any future peace agreement with Syria explicitly state that Syria will not receive U.S. military aid. (IDF Radio 1/29 in WNC 1/30)

UN passes resolution extending the mandate of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for 6 mos. (RL 1/29 in WNC 1/30)

30 JANUARY

Syrian VP Khaddam, FM Shara visit Qatar. (SANA 1/31 in WNC 2/3)

Roadside bomb planted by Hizballah detonates in s. Lebanon, killing 3 IDF soldiers, wounding 1. (MM 1/30; MM, NYT 1/31; al-Safir 2/1 in WNC 2/6)

Families of Kuwaitis abducted by, taken to Iraq during the Gulf War send an envoy to Israel to ask for intelligence assistance in locating, identifying their lost relatives. In exchange, they offer to send a high-ranking Kuwaiti officer to Hizballah to get information on Israeli MIAs, POWs; to finance a prisoner exchange if possible. Kuwait has no diplomatic ties with Israel. (ITV 1/30 in WNC 2/3)

31 JANUARY

In Paris, Pres. Chirac meets with Israeli FM Levy, says France is willing to act as Israel’s intermediary with Syria to close the gaps preventing a resumption of negotiations. (AFP 1/31 in WNC 2/3)

In Sincan, Turkey, 100s come together to celebrate Jerusalem Day, a day (1st set aside 17 yrs. ago by Iran’s Ayatollah Khomeini) for Muslims to protest Israel’s occupation of Jerusalem; hear speech by Iranian amb. Muhammad Reza Bagheri. When Bagheri arrives, the crowd chants “Down with Israel! Down with Arafat!” (MM 2/6; NYT 2/13)

Sweden reopens its embassy in Beirut, which was closed during the 1975-90 Lebanese civil war. (RL 1/31 in WNC 2/4; Svenska Dagbladet [Stockholm] 2/1 in WNC 2/5)

1 FEBRUARY

After several days of mtgs. in Denmark, Egypt, Israeli, Jordanian, PA delegations endorse the establishment of a “peace alliance” to recruit popular support for peace talks, issue declaration. (ITV 2/1 in WNC 2/4; MM 2/4; RJ 2/5 in WNC 2/7; SANA 2/13 in WNC 2/18; WP 3/1) (see Doc. A3)

In Nablus, PA prisoner Yusuf Isma’il Baba dies while in custody fr. injuries received during interrogation by PA security forces. Baba, the 11th to die in PA custody, was arrested on 1/3 for making an “improper property sale.” (NYT, WP, WT 2/2; NYT 2/4; MM 2/5; PR 2/7) (see 12/3)

2 FEBRUARY

On the sidelines of the World Economic Forum mtg. in Davos, Switzerland, Israeli PM Netanyahu meets with Egyptian pres. Mubarak for the 1st time in 6 mos.; accepts invitation to visit Cairo in the spring. Netanyahu, Arafat also meet; agree to hold talks at Erez 2/6 to discuss the peace process. (CSM, MM, NYT, WP 2/3; MA 2/3 in WNC 2/4; RE 2/3 in WNC 2/6; MEI 2/7)

Syrian VP Khaddam arrives in Algeria to meet with Pres. Lamine Zeroual. (SATN 2/2 in WNC 2/6)

Israeli officials say that Israel may not request the extradition of Hamas’s Abu Marzouq; there is little hard evidence linking him to anti-Israeli attacks; Israel fears he would use his trial as a political platform. (YA 2/2 in WNC 2/4; WT 2/3)

3 FEBRUARY

In keeping with the 1/14 Hebron protocol, the IDF begins a phased reopening of al-Shuhada Street in Hebron. Ambulances, taxis are allowed to use the road, but private vehicles are not. (CSM, NYT 2/4; MEI 2/7; JP 2/15)

In the Vatican, PM Netanyahu meets Pope John Paul II for the 1st time. (MM 2/3; Radio UNO [Rome] 2/3, 2/4 in WNC 2/5; NYT 2/4) (see Peace Monitor for details)
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Israeli West

Arafat (see RL WP, rallah soldiers, their

past and carrying

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lebanon.

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Arabia

planned

death in custody 2/1. (NYT 2/4; MM 2/5)

Israel asks the U.S. to give it F-22

advanced tactical stealth fighters as compen-

sation, if the U.S. supplies Saudi Arabia with

100 F-16s to replace its F-15 fleet. Saudi Arabia has not requested the F-16s yet, but is

expected to do so. (MA 2/3 in WNC 2/6; WT

2/14)

4 FEBRUARY

PM Netanyahu cancels a trip to Jordan

planned for 2/5 and postpones a mtg. with

Arafat set for 2/6 after 2 Israeli helicopters,

carrying an unusual amount of ammunition

and explosives, collide over the Galilee on

their way to s. Lebanon, killing 73 IDF

soldiers, 13 of whom are officers. Over the

past 3 yrs. 68 soldiers have been killed in s.

Lebanon. (RL 2/4 in WNC 2/6; MM, NYT,

WP, WT 2/5; AFP 2/5 in WNC 2/7; CSM, MM,

NYT, WP 2/6; al-Dustur, RMC 2/6 in WNC 2/7;

RL, VOL 2/6, RL 2/7 in WNC 2/10; MM 2/7;

RL 2/7 in WNC 2/11; JP 2/15)

In Nabatiyya, Lebanon, leading Hizballah


and his deputy Shaykh Naim Kassem, meet to discuss party fundraising. (MM 2/7)

Syrian VP Khaddam arrives in Libya

to meet with Col. Qadhafi. (SATN 2/4 in WNC

2/6)

IDF bulldozes Palestinian homes in

Jabbah, nr. Hebron, and al-Khadr for having

no permits. 10s of other families receive

notices that their homes will be demolished to

make way for a bypass road. (LAWE 2/13)

(see 2/3)

Citing security reasons, Shin Bet revokes

the press permit of al-Hayat’s Jerusalem

bureau chief Ruba Husari, making it impossi-

ble for her to enter Israel fr. her home in the

West Bank. (WP 2/6)

Lebanon, Brazil sign 2 protocols: one on

cultural issues, the other on air transport.

(RL 2/4 in WNC 2/6; RL 2/6 in WNC 2/7)

(see 12/16)

IDF shells Kfar Roumman village n. of the

Israeli self-declared security zone. Lebanon

says it will submit a complaint to ILMG.

ILMG has already found Israel responsible 3
									times for shelling villages in violation of the

4/96 understanding. (RL 2/4 in WNC 2/6; WT

2/5)

The WP reveals that Secy. of State Al-

bright’s grandparents were Jews who died in

the Holocaust, says her family hid their

Jewish identity from her. Albright was raised

a Catholic. (WP 2/4)

5 FEBRUARY

In Tehran, Iranian FM Velayati, Lebanon-

ese amb. Munir Talghiq discuss expanding

bilateral relations. (IRNA 2/5 in WNC 2/7)

U.S. jet on military maneuvers in the

Mediterranean crashes off the coast of Israel,

killing 4 soldiers. (MM, WT 2/6)

6 FEBRUARY

At end of a 5-day visit, Belarus delega-

tion signs an agmt. with Israel on security

cooperation in the fields of prevention of

organized crime, terrorism, drug trafficking. (Belapal [Minsk] 2/4 in WNC 2/5)

7 FEBRUARY

PM Netanyahu gives the order to release

all female Palestinian prisoners held by

Israel (NYT, WT 2/8; WP 2/12; JP 2/15) (see

Peace Monitor for details)

Hizballah Secy. Gen. Nasrallah calls for

Arafat’s assassination during rally to mark

Jerusalem Day. In Bangladesh, similar anti-

Israeli, anti-U.S. rallies are held to mark the

day. (al-Safir 2/8 in WNC 2/11; NYT 2/13)

(see 1/31)

8 FEBRUARY

10 top Israeli lawmakers (incl. Likud’s

Michael Eytan, Labor’s Beilin, fmr. Shin Bet

officials Gideon Ezra, Yaacov Perry, settler

leader Yisrael Harel) meet to discuss the

Israeli military presence in s. Lebanon in

light of the helicopter crash 2/4; recommend

the government consider a unilateral pullout.

(MM, NYT, WT 2/10; MM 2/11)

In Helipolis, outside of Cairo, gunmen

attempt to assassinate Egyptian PM Kamal

al-Janzuri, who escapes unharmed. (MBC

2/8 in WNC 2/11)

9 FEBRUARY

Netanyahu, Arafat hold 2-hr. talk at

Erez, agree to start detailed Oslo II imple-

mentation talks 2/16. (MM, NYT, WP, WT 2/10;

IDF Radio 2/10 in WNC 2/11; JP 2/22)
Hizballah attacks IDF outpost in s. Lebanon, wounding 7 soldiers. (AFP, RL 2/9 in WNC 2/11; MM, NYT, WP, WT 2/10)

The Israeli group Victoms of Arab Terror bring a suit to the Israeli High Court, calling for the appeal of the decision to release the Palestinian female prisoners. (NYT 2/10; WP 2/12)

10 FEBRUARY

Israeli cabinet begins discussions to determine from which areas of the West Bank the IDF will withdraw under further redeployment. Various security branches present different options. (MM 2/10; IDF Radio 2/10 in WNC 2/11; ITV 2/10 in WNC 2/12; CSM 2/11) (see Peace Monitor for details)

SLA releases 10 Lebanese detainees fr. al-Khiyam prison in s. Lebanon. (RL 2/10 in WNC 2/12)

11 FEBRUARY

At dusk, Israel begins releasing Palestinian female prisoners. The Victims of Terror group files another last-minute challenge with the High Court (see 2/9), forcing the Israeli authorities to recall some of the women, prompting the rest of them to say they would not go home until all were freed. All 31 women are released by midnight. (MM 2/11; NYT, WP, WT 2/12; JP 2/22)

French DM Charles Millon arrives in Israel for 2-day visit to discuss furthering bilateral defense relations, which began in 1993. (AFP 2/11 in WNC 2/13; MM 2/13; Les Echos [Paris] 2/17 in WNC 2/20; JP 2/22)

IDF continues forced transfer of Jahalin bedouin. 17 families remain at the old site. To date 150 bedouin have been transferred. (WP 2/12; NYT 2/18; JP 2/22) (see 1/27)

To avoid any reprisal attacks, Israeli defense officials tell Netanyahu that they would prefer the U.S. to deport Hamas's Abu Marzouq to Jordan, rather than extradite him to Israel. (IDF Radio 2/11 in WNC 2/12; YA 2/12 in WNC 2/13) (see 2/2)

In response to Hizballah's 2/9 attack, Israeli Air Force (IAF) bombs Hizballah's radio station in Baalbek, PFLP-GC bases in Beirut's suburbs and nr. the border with Syria (wounding 6). This is Israel's 1st major sortie outside the self-declared security zone since the 4/96 aggression. 3 PFLP-GC mbns., 1 civilian are injured. (MM 2/11; AFP, QPAR, RL 2/11 in WNC 2/12; NYT, WP 2/12)

SLA expels Lebanese citizen fr. the Israeli self-declared security zone to n. Lebanon. (RL 2/11 in WNC 2/13) (see 12/23)

12 FEBRUARY

Israeli-PA economic subcomm. meets in Jerusalem; discusses debts Israel owes the PA, which PA delegation head, Planning M Nabil Shaath, says totals over $1 b. (al-Ayyam, QY 2/12 in WNC 2/14)

PM Netanyahu arrives in Washington for 4-day official visit. (MM, WT 2/12)

Israeli Pmin. officials say that they knew of Secy. of State Albright's Jewish roots as early as 1994, but did not want to make them known, manipulate them, "lest she feel pressure to prove her evenhandedness at Israel's expense." (WP 2/13) (see 2/4)

IDF demolishes partially built Palestinian home in Hebron, informs 2 other Palestinian families that their homes, built over 2 yrs. ago, will be demolished. (LAWE 2/13) (see 2/4)

IAF resumes attacks on PFLP-GC targets in Lebanon, injuring 3 Palestinians. Lebanon files a complaint with ILMG regarding the injury to 1 civilian in yesterday's attacks. (MM 2/12; RL 2/12 in WNC 2/13)

A bomb explodes in 'Ayn al-Hilwa refugee camp in Lebanon, killing 1 person, who cannot be identified. No one takes responsibility. (RL 2/12 in WNC 2/13) (see 1/19)

13 FEBRUARY

PM Netanyahu meets with Pres. Clinton in Washington. Talks focus on resuming negotiations with Syria. U.S. promises to look into South Africa's proposed arms sale to Syria (see 1/22), to upgrade Israeli weapons if a U.S. deal to sell Saudi Arabia 100 F-16s goes through (see 2/2). Saudi Arabia says U.S., Israeli positions on F-16 sale have a disturbing "cold war" ring. (MM, WT 2/13; IDF Radio, YA 2/13 in WNC 2/14; ITV 2/13 in WNC 2/18; MM, NYT, WP 2/14; WP 2/15; MM 2/17; WJJW 2/20; JP 2/22; WT 2/23)

In keeping with the Hebron protocol, IDF fully reopens the Hebron central market in H2. Immediately, Jewish settlers enter the market, scuffle with Palestinians, claiming market is a security risk to local Jews. The market was partially reopened 2/12. (CSM, WP 2/14)

Iranian military delegation arrives in Damascus for 5 days of talks with Syrian DM Mustafa Tlas. (SATN 2/13 in WNC 2/18;
IRNA, RMC 2/15 in WNC 2/19; MM 2/18; IRNA 2/19 in WNC 2/20)

14 FEBRUARY

Hizballah arrests 5 people, incl. party activists, for allegedly spying for Israel; says it will turn them over to Syria for prosecution. (AFP 2/14 in WNC 2/19)

15 FEBRUARY

PM Netanyahu says that he would not rule out a "cosmetic withdrawal" on the Golan Heights. (IDF Radio 2/15 in WNC 2/19)

Syrian VP Khaddam, FM Shara' make brief visit to Cairo to deliver Pres. Mubarak a message fr. Pres. Asad. (RE, SANA 2/15 in WNC 2/19; MM 2/18)

Mufti of Jerusalem 'Akrama Sabri says that a technical comm. of Palestinian archaeologists, engineers has been set up to scientifically monitor Israeli excavations and their effects on the al-Aqsa Mosque, nearby waqf properties. (al-Ayyam 2/15 in WNC 2/19)

CHRONOLOGY SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

AFP (Agence France Presse, Paris)
CSM (Christian Science Monitor, Boston)
HA (Ha'aretz, Tel Aviv)
IGPO (Israeli Government Press Office, Jerusalem)
INA (Iraqi News Agency, Baghdad)
IRNA (Iranian News Agency, Tehran)
ITV (Israel Television Network, Jerusalem)
JT (Jordan Times, Amman)
JTV (Jordan Television Network, Amman)
LAWE (Land and Water Establishment—The Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment, Jerusalem)
MA (Ma'ariv, Tel Aviv)
MBC (Middle East Broadcasting Centre, London)
MEI (Middle East International, London)
MM (Mideast Mirror, London)
NYT (New York Times, New York)
PR (Palestine Report, Jerusalem)
QPAR (Al-Quds Palestinian Radio, clandestine)
QY (Qol Yisra'el Radio, Tel Aviv)
RE (Republic of Egypt Radio, Cairo)
RJ (Radio Jordan, Amman)
RL (Radio Lebanon, Beirut)
RMC (Radio Monte Carlo, Paris)
SA (al-Sharq al-Awsat, London)
SANA (Syrian Arab News Agency, Damascus)
SATN (Syrian Arab Television Network, Damascus)
TJT (The Jerusalem Times, East Jerusalem)
VOA (Voice of the Arabs, Cairo)
VIRI (Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Tehran)
VOL (Voice of Lebanon, Beirut)
WJW (Washington Jewish Week, Rockville, MD)
WNC (World News Connection [internet], Washington, DC)
WP (Washington Post, Washington, DC)
WT (Washington Times, Washington, DC)
YA (Yedi'ot Aharonot, Tel Aviv)

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