

## Five points for Olmert-Bush Discussion on June 19, 2007

Further to PM Olmert's recent statement that the developments in Gaza can create "an opportunity like never before", the Geneva Initiative would like to raise five points on which the discussion between Bush and Olmert should focus – to prevent this opportunity from being missed:

1. The recent events in the Palestinian Authority illustrate the need to re-sume negotiations and dialogue between the sides after a six year political stalemate and the failure of unilateral actions. The control over the Gaza Strip implemented by Hamas reminds both sides that **time is a factor and every minute which goes by distances the feasibility of reaching peace.**

2. The most pessimistic scenarios - according to which unilateralism will weaken the pragmatic forces within the Palestinian Authority, result in anarchy and deteriorate the entire region to a situation in which a peace agreement will not be feasible – are being translated to reality. **The opportunity for peace still exists, but the operational time-frame to reach it is narrowing down.**

3. In order not to miss the opportunity referred to by PM Olmert, **Israel and the Palestinian Authority need to embark on negotiations for a final-status agreement**, regarding a Palestinian state which will at first be established in the West Bank. **The immediate steps which should be implemented by Israel and the United States need to strengthen the pragmatic forces in the West Bank headed by President Abbas and the Fatah** in order to present a sane alternative to the Hamas regime in Gaza.

4. **Negotiations for a final status agreement should be accompanied by pragmatic measures to be implemented in the West Bank in order to strengthen the new Fayyad Government** (release of prisoners; transfer of funds; removing checkpoints...etc). Simultaneously **Israel and Hamas should conduct dialogue on the operational level** in order to stabilize the ceasefire, prevent a humanitarian crisis, resolve the checkpoints' issue, create a basic economic infrastructure and return home the Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit.

5. A horizon for peace will lead the Palestinian Authority to social and economic prosperity which it has never known before. Therefore instead of succumbing to the situation now prevailing within the Palestinian Authority **a political process with President Abbas which will significantly improve life in the West Bank can change the recent developments in Gaza** and prevent a re-run of Gaza in the West Bank.