



THE MINISTER FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS



Date

January 18 2009

Dear Ahmed Aboul-Gheit, Tzipi Livni and Riad al-Malki,

In these difficult times in the Middle East, we would like to express our hope that a ceasefire will be fully respected and durable and that it will bring an end to the immediate suffering of Israelis and Palestinians. It must urgently lead to substantial humanitarian aid to flow into Gaza and to be delivered to those in need. We have already made substantial humanitarian contributions and we are willing to consider further Danish and Dutch contributions as and when humanitarian organizations are able to make an assessment of the immediate needs and ways to safely reach the people in need.

Allow us to assure you that Denmark and the Netherlands have actively been supporting the international efforts to bring about a durable ceasefire. While a durable ceasefire and humanitarian aid must be the immediate priority, we acknowledge the need for Israel to make sure that Gaza (Hamas) will not be able to re-arm. In the past, we are aware that Hamas has been able to arm itself through the illegal trafficking of weapons and ammunition passing the borders of Gaza and by sea. We understand that for Israel, the prevention of that to happen again is a crucial element in the bringing about of a sustainable ceasefire.

We can assure you, that Denmark and the Netherlands are willing to contribute to an international mechanism acceptable to the parties concerned (Egypt, Israel and the Palestinian Authority) that can be deployed

H.E. Mr. Ahmed Aboul-Gheit, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Egypt

H.E. Mrs. Tzipi Livni, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Israel

H.E. Mr. Riad al-Malki, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Palestinian Authority

to monitor the border, including by contributing to capacity building. An international mechanism should contribute to preventing illegal trafficking in arms and ammunition and to ensuring the sustained reopening of crossing points on the basis of the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access and the Security Council resolution 1860.

We have urged our EU-colleagues to contribute substantially to these efforts. As a first step, and with a short notice, Denmark and the Netherlands are ready to dispatch a fact finding team to the border area in order to prepare for a possible international mechanism.

We are looking forward to participating in the redeployment of the EU-BAM at Rafah, when that becomes feasible. We are also looking at other contributions on how to stop weapons smuggling focusing on intelligence, diplomacy and existing military instruments. In addition, we are pleased to note the French, British and German initiative on measures to counter weapons smuggling, which we support.

Finally, we would like to express our hope that the conflict in Gaza will be followed up by new momentum in the peace process and by progress towards the two state-solution. Only an end to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict will bring lasting peace and security to Israel and the Palestinians.

Yours sincerely



Per Stig Møller



Maxime Verhagen