Question: Mr. President, you say in your speech that you are ready to receive here in Cairo all of the interested parties in the Middle East, including representatives of the United States, the Soviet Union and Israel. Is it your intention to have the heads of State here in Cairo?

President: Well, I should welcome them, really I welcome them. But my main aim in this decisive moment is to try and do the preparatory job for Geneva so it doesn’t need to have all the heads of state. I have always proposed this especially when Vance visited us here in the area, I proposed that a working committee under Vance should start preparing for Geneva because going to Geneva is not the objective in itself. Peace is the objective. So, we shouldn’t go to Geneva and differ or spend a lot of time there on procedural arrangements and so we should do this in such a preparatory committee or working group or so. Now I am returning to my proposal and I am saying that I am ready to receive, starting from next Saturday, representatives from all the parties concerned in this conflict.

Question: Mr. President, will this be on a Foreign Ministers level? Then, would that be a good idea?
President: Well, our letter that will go today from our Foreign Minister to the superpowers and the Secretary General of the United Nations and all the parties in the confrontation states, including the Palestinians and Israel, will say that we may agree upon the level. We don’t ask for a precise level, as foreign ministers or so. This is for them to decide.

Question: Mr. President, if you have the representatives here, whether they are foreign ministers or whatever the level may be, isn’t it possible that you could get down to such basic details that there eventually would be no need for a Geneva Conference? you might be able to settle it here?

President: Well, believe me I don’t aim to do this at all. What I am concerned really for is this, Geneva without preparation will be a failure and this will be a very dangerous setback.

Question: Mr. Sadat I am sure you are a man who is known not be afraid of taking risks. Isn’t this especially risky by inviting not only the United States and the Soviet Union and Israel, but Syria included here too, countries that you had some criticism of in your speech today? What if they don’t show up? Couldn’t that immediately finish your peace initiative? If this meeting in Cairo is not a success because certain party had not come?
President: Not at all. In my speech today you may remember that I have said that I have pledged before our Parliament that I shall be continuing the peace initiative. I am not intending by this initiative to put any one in a corner at all. I am only seeking the proper way to prepare for Geneva for the ultimate goal of all of us, and that's peace, permanent peace in the area. I never thought of putting anyone in a corner or so. For the Syrians, for example, this in an Arab capital. They may have any reservations. For example, if I chose any other place, but an Arab capital like Cairo, well it is for them to decide.

Question: Would I say, Mr. President, if the Syrians say that they don't feel like they can come to Cairo, would you go ahead and hold the conference if everyone accepts it?

President: Well, As I told you, this conference is preparatory conference for Geneva. Whoever comes here I shall be starting the conference with him. Whoever comes here I shall be starting the conference with him here in Egypt, here in Cairo.

Question: Mr. President, as you know, people all over the world were listening to your speech today. A Jerusalem newspaper editor was also listening and he noted your critical remarks about the Soviet Union and about Syria to a lesser extent and he said he thought his interpretation, his personal interpretation
was that your remarks made it all the more impossible for representatives of Russia and Syria to come and he said perhaps that was the motivation of President Sadat who wanted a conference that could immediately get to work, that was ready to work on peace, and may be you intended that the Russians and Syrians...

President: I think not. I didn't intend it at all. I gave only examples for what had happened in the past. I didn't prepare any attack on the Soviet Union, I only related some of the history of the Soviet Union here. Well, it is for the Soviet Union to decide. But as a co-chairman and the second world power in our world of today, I have no objection at all against it to come here and share with us the preparation for Geneva, and it is for it to decide.

Question: Mr. Sadat, why didn't you wait for the Israelis to come forth with some concessions instead of going with another peace initiative?

President: Well it is really my idea. It is not another initiative. It is something that completes my initiative that I started by going to Jerusalem because, well, what would be the situation and how can we keep the momentum of the peace process. That is the motivation that was behind my proposal; and my proposal today is just to keep the mo-
mentum of the peace process that I have started by my visit to Jerusalem.

**Question:** Mr. President, are you at all disappointed that in the past four or five days since you returned to Egypt from your trip to Jerusalem the Israelis haven’t come up with any concrete concessions? They talked about it but nothing as we know has come out.

**President:** Not at all. Not at all. I haven’t told my deputies in our Parliament today. I think the ultimate goal of my visit to Israel has been achieved. This goal was to bring down the barrier, the psychological barrier, that has taken place between us for about thirty years and which, as I told my deputies today, that sometimes as I have learned this from the Israeli Defence Minister, in the last ten days we were about to go to war. Why? Because of this psychological barrier. They have no confidence in us. We have no confidence in them. There was only violation, hatred, bitterness and so. They are very sensitive after the October War of any surprise attack. Well they thought when I started manoeuvres here they were having their manoeuvres. They declared about their manoeuvres. But we didn’t declare so they thought that we were preparing for war. And for that say I have calculated the whole situation. My calculation, I mean proved to be
right. Because till the last ten days we may have got ourselves in war. The Israelis and we without knowing why did we do this. It is only because of this psychological barrier, and then the lack of confidence among the parties concerned and this sensitivity of the Israelis for any sudden attack or surprise attack they would have joined in war for no reason except that this barrier. I think the ultimate goal of my visit has been achieved. This is bringing down this barrier, and now we were looking forward for a civilized meeting between ourselves and all the parties concerned to discuss every thing, without any conditions.

Question: Mr. President, did you talk with any world leaders concerning this new initiative of this new proposal about the meeting in Cairo, or did everyone hear of it for the first time today?

President: Not at all, not at all. Because it completes my initiative in visiting Jerusalem. This is not a new initiative. I want to mark this.

Question: When Israel heard of this new proposal, one fellow said: Now, Mr. Sadat has surprises again, as quick in the face.

President: (laughing): Some one said that I am always adopting the policy of electric shocks. Not at all.

Question: But you didn't confer with other world leaders.
President: No. I don't want to put, I mean to induce, any other one who may feel that he doesn't agree to this or that. It was my own initiative to visit Jerusalem as I said today to my deputies. I didn't discuss it at all with any of my colleagues in the Arab world.

Question: In the few hours since your speech, have you heard of any reaction from any of those who might be invited as to whether or not they would come?

President: Not at all, I am fully relaxed here in Ismailia. My people hailed me from the airport to here and really I am relaxing here. My Vice-President Mobarak is looking after everything, and you may wonder, do you believe that until this moment I didn't read anything from the attack and abuse from the Arab world, believe me this is my habit. This is a side issue.

Journalist: You left the criticism behind you.

President: Behind me or I would have prepared my speech accordingly and I don't want to be nervous. We are working on a very sacred job from my point of view.

Question: Mr. President, a question concerning this proposed meeting here in Cairo. What if no one accepts this invitation but Israel? What if only one country accepts, and that's Israel?
President: Yes, some of them asked me. Yes, and some of them asked me to prolong my visit for another 24 hours so that we could achieve this. But I told them I am not after a separate agreement, I am after a settlement for peace in the whole area, in spite of the absence of Arabs.

Question: Mr. President, getting back to those who might or might not attend, who would you propose as representatives of the Palestinians in the Cairo Conference?

President: Well, I shall leave it to the Palestinians to choose them. I shall not choose for them at all. It is for them to choose their representatives.

Question: So, it could be Yasser Arafat or could be West Bank Palestinian leaders or both?

President: Well, it is left to them. Completely left to them, and I shall discuss this when they approach me.

Question: Well, Mr. President, I should then be getting to the point of contention now that we have concerning Geneva in that, as I understand it, there is a dispute or a lack of agreement on who would represent the Palestinians at Geneva, won't there be the same problem on who would represent the Palestinians in Cairo at your preparatory conference?
President: I don't think this will be a problem at all. Especially, as I told you before, that sometime Yasser Arafat himself has proposed an American professor of Palestinian origin to represent them. Well, I leave it for the Palestinians to decide.

Question: The Syrian government said this morning, this was just before your speech, that in their opinion, this was the Information Minister speaking, that your trip to Jerusalem, has so divided the Arab world that they said it would be impossible to reconvene the Geneva Conference at the present time. Was there anything you think in your speech that might cause them to change their mind?

President: Well, it is for them to decide and I am accustomed unfortunately for this. You know, in the convening of the first Geneva Conference on the 21st of December 1973, after the October War, they have done the same thing. It will be quite natural because they have done it before. They said that I have already reached agreement with Henry Kissinger and because I agreed to go to Geneva and they refused without real reason. But I said I have my reason. They couldn't hear, like they are now shouting and so and they started telling the whole world and especially the Arab world, to the extent that the late King Faisal sent me his late Foreign Minister Sakkaf at dawn, with a message tell-
ing me that is happening, the Syrians have told him that I have made a separate agreement that Henry Kissinger would fulfil and my agreement on going to Geneva on the 21st of December 73 would only be just a pretext to sign the agreement there in Geneva. Well, I told him this was false and complete lie.

Question: Mr. President, do you think that the current problem will blow over and that it is not so serious now, I mean the opposition to your peace initiative?

President: I hope that they would come to reason. Because also today it appears they are saying that they are ready to continue the process and go to Geneva for the big conference and so. I don't know what is the real one, what you already have told me or what I have already read today in the newspapers, but at any rate it is for them to choose. I have put my position quite clearly before my Parliament today to the whole world. More than 18 Television stations abroad were receiving through the satellite and another six in the Arab world. I have made my position clear, quite clear, well it is for them to decide.

Question: Mr. Sadat, as I followed your remarks during recent years, you usually would say that the cards, 99 per cent of the cards, or most of the cards, were in the hands of the American, but in the last 17 days since your peace initiative, hasn't that changed?
Hasn't the role of the United States changed? Aren't you holding the cards now, most of them?

President: Not at all. On the contrary, what has happened in the last 17 days emphasizes my idea about 99 per cent. Why? It has been proved after my visit in Jerusalem which has achieved its ultimate goal as I told you, and this is to bring down the psychological barrier of differences between them. We have brought it down during this visit. For that I consider my mission to Jerusalem a complete success as I told my deputies in the Parliament today.

Question: But the role of the United States to be more involved than as of late, for instead you have called the Cairo Conference, not the co-chairman of the Geneva Conference, you seem to have taken the ball, so to speak, in the last week or so.

President: I am only facilitating the whole thing and as I told you I am really trying to keep the momentum that I have already started by my move to Jerusalem through good preparation for Geneva. For that I proposed Cairo because this is also part of the psychological problem. The Israelis were never admitted in any place in the Arab world. Well, they are admitted here. I have asked them to come as one party concerned in this conflict.
But I must return to your question. What has happened emphasizes the importance of the American role because as I told you the only party that can play a role in this conflict and which enjoys the confidence of both sides, and let me hope that the Israelis have the same confidence I have in Carter. Let me hope so. Because if they have the same confidence that I have in Carter, I think in no time we shall reach an agreement. In no time. This is the importance of the role of the United States, on the contrary, it is emphasized.

Question: Some people have criticized the Carter administration saying that in the recent past the Carter administration has either been unwilling or has been unable to put significant pressure on Israel or to convince Israel that concessions should be made. Do you go along with them?

President: Well, as a matter of fact, you have heard me today telling my Parliament that President Assad has sent me an envoy. For one of the points that he sent with this envoy was this point precisely, that is, the Americans don't want to exert any influence, as they even if they wanted, don't have the capability to do so. But I am against this 100 per cent, as I told President Assad, I mean the envoy of President Assad. No, not at all. May I remind you, the second disengagement agreement, the American administration was
at its lowest at that time. The Watergate problem, Ford was not an elected President, he was an appointed President. Another Watergate, like Lockheed and so, and then the elections started and so, all this made the American administration very weak. For that the Israelis rejected the first phase of the second disengagement agreement, rejected Henry Kissinger and sent him back to the United States. When I made after that my move for peace, opening the Suez Canal and so, I put the Israelis in a corner really, and in September of the same year we concluded the second disengagement agreement. This happened during the time that the American administration as I told you was in its lowest position with regard to the Congress or the country or anything at all.

**Question:** Is the Carter administration now in a position of strength, you feel, to fulfil this role?

**President:** For sure, for sure, for sure. I am not asking Carter to drop any special relations with Israel. At all. I am not asking Carter also to be on my side against Israel. Not at all. Let him keep the special relations with Israel. But let us seek peace based on justice. For example, when I visited Jerusalem, and this, as I think, is very important, we spoke quite frankly. What is your problem, I asked them. They told me we don't want any.
Mr. president, if you have another agreement that you wish to make, we shall be ready. I feel that there is no more war after the October War, except if Israel chooses to try to impose its conditions and adopt the old arrogance policy of them. For that I promised the Parliament to return to them, but from what I have known in Jerusalem, they are ready to sit and discuss in such a civilized way all the problems without any conditions so far that it is not only our efforts that are to be done, but the efforts of the United States, and this time the United States doesn't need to be pressure here or there, but just to see what we are discussing and to tell those who is not logical or correct to be correct. This is my idea. For that I tell you, the role of the United States is emphasized in the next step.

Question: Mr. President, if you reached agreement in your preparatory conference here in Cairo, and then go to Geneva and you are successful there, what about the other Arab countries, what about those countries that might not have been involved in this process?

President: As I told you, I shall be seeking a settlement not a bilateral agreement between me and Israel. I shall be seeking a settlement for the whole problem. In this case, if every thing goes O.K. here in Cairo, and no
one attends except one or two or whatever comes, I shall be proceeding to Geneva also, and as you say if it proves to be success and we can reach a settlement, in this case I shall be asking for an Arab Summit and I shall put before them what I have reached. But mark this, this time I shall be proceeding until the end of the way.

Question: So you won't stop along the way.

Answer: No.

Question: You will meet in Cairo, you will go to Geneva with whatever you have from Cairo and hope for a success there, and then call for an Arab Summit conference?

President: An Arab Summit because it is not an Egyptian-Israeli settlement, it is an Arab-Israeli settlement. I am not after an Egyptian-Israeli settlement.

Question: Mr. Sadat, will you give us any kind of a time-table. People talk about December 21st as a possible date to reconvene the Geneva Conference. Would that be too soon, you think?

President: Well, no it is not too soon. But Geneva in itself is not an objective as I told. It is a good preparation and if we couldn't convene by the end of this year, I mean December, I think in the preparatory conference that I am asking for we shall be always on the right track. And Geneva may come I mean
early next year, but we should start working
for Geneva from now, and, as I proposed, from
next Saturday we are ready to receive all the
parties concerned with the two super-powers,
the co-sponsors.

Question: Mr. Sadat, you said in your
speech today that back in 1971 you launched
a peace initiative, and nothing came of that
initiative and war came in 1973. Now you have
launched another peace initiative, even on a
much grander and broader scale. What would
happen if this one should fail?

President: We shall have no alternative
except to exercise our right to liberate our
land.

Question: When?

President: No one knows.

Question: But did you not agree with Mr.
Beigin that war was to be ruled out?

President: I quite agree to this. I declared
this today in my Parliament also, and my
people are hailing me because of this, really,
and I shall be doing my best. But as I told my
Parliament also, I must report to them every
step. Well, what if the Israelis returned to
their arrogant policy and so? They would be
putting us in a position where we could not
find any things except exercising our right to
liberate our land. I don't think we shall reach
this, because from this trip I have been in
Jerusalem with Beigin, Dayan, with Yadin,
with Weizman, I don't think we shall reach this at all, because both of us hailed the idea of no war again.

**Question:** One final question if I might, Mr. President. You mentioned the holding of an Arab Summit after Geneva. Do you see any need for another Arab Summit before that time?

**President:** No need for that, because until this moment and with the preparatory conference also, I shall be working in the context of the strategy that has been adopted by the Arab Summit in Rabat. If there is any change, there should be a summit meeting, but there will be no change at all. This strategy consists of two points: The first one is the liberation of the land occupied after 1967 war. The second point is no compromise on the Palestinian question, and it should be solved and the Palestinians should be given a homeland and the right to self-determination. The United States has agreed to this and declared it by Carter. So, I don't think there will be any need now, but whenever there is a new development or so that may touch the strategy, for sure I shall be asking for an Arab Summit.

**Journalist:** Thank you very much, Mr. President, and we all wish you and all the leaders of the Middle East great luck and great fortune in resolving this very serious problem.