

At the beginning of the press conference President Sadat said he hoped he had enough time to visit Lebanon. He said he seizes this opportunity to extend his greetings to President Sarkis and the Lebanese people.

We are living with them their tragedy. We lived it during the battles and we are living it now. We hope that sovereignty returns to the Lebanese people over their lands, he said.

The formula of coexistence should return to the Lebanese people over their lands, he said.

The formula of coexistence should return to Lebanon, President Sadat said, regretting attempts of division between Christians and Moslems. We denounce this firmly, he asserted.

Answering a question about the situation in Southern Lebanon, the President said that during his recent visit to the United States in last April he discussed the situation in Southern Lebanon with President Carter although the issue was not on the agenda of talks between them.

The President flatly rejects the Israeli claims in Southern Lebanon and condemned the Israeli exploitation of the circumstances

Lebanon is passing through. We will resist such acts until Lebanon becomes as it was before without relinquishing one inch or a single centimetre, President Sadat affirmed.

Answering a query on President Assad's approval of President Sadat's visit to Israel, President Sadat said it was natural to discuss this subject.

President Assad did not approve this visit and he did not agree with me, he said.

Answering another query on the reason behind President Assad's refusal, President Sadat said this is his belief he has the right to have his own opinion. This does not mean that there is a fundamental difference between me and President Assad, but he does not agree.

Answering another query whether President Sadat explained to President Assad the aim of his visit to Israel, President Sadat said why should I explain and take long time in relating, while we were discussing all facts of the situation, why should we give this subject more than it deserves, he said.

One of the journalists asked that President Sadat relates the view submitted by President Assad in this connection, President Sadat said there was no need to explain to President Assad anything, he knew of my initiative when he heard it but we have not agreed in this issue.

I will go to the Israelis in their home to tell them, if you want to live in this region then these are the facts and this is my target.

Replying to a question on the possible results of the President's visit to Israel, President Sadat said let us wait to see I have not prepared anything except to place all before the Knesset. They then have to decide for themselves as I said before the substitute would be dreadful for both them and us, the President clarified.

President Sadat said that he hopes that the issue of the Palestinian representation in Geneva would be solved. There is the psychological complexes which represent seventy per cent of the problems in the region, the President added.

When we finalize with these psychological problems which were created and lived in this area and were about to screen the substance, we may be able to approach the other problems in an easy and serious way, President Sadat said.

President Sadat made it clear that without the Palestinians, there could not be peace or Geneva and without resolving the Palestinian problem, there would not be peace as well, this reality must be clear to all, the President added.

Asked on his talk about psychological complexes and whether he believes that this will solve this animosity President Sadat said. Certainly this is what I mean.

Answering another query on the reason behind being sure of this he said I say I am going there for solving the psychological complexes but if you consider it in the sense that I will succeed hundred per cent then you are mistaken I do not know what will happen I am doing my duty and the rest be left to God.

Answering another query whether he is serious to going to Israel President Sadat said this is the one thousand time to be asked this question. You knew me for seven years I mean what I say when defeatism was behind me all over the Arab nation before the October War I did not care a rap about this defeatism but adopted with my brother Hafez el Assad the decision of the battle and we proceeded together.

This is my system of work and I do not want to work with two policies or two faces.

In answer to a question that some might interpret his going to Geneva as onward defeatism President Sadat said : We heard of defeatism before the October battles, claims and analysis we got bored of this, and everyone might keep his analysis to himself and what is important is the results.

Asked whether his departure to Israel will be shortly President Sadat said I have not yet received the invitation I might receive it upon my return home.

Asked if he felt confident about the soundness of Arab solidarity at this stage, President Sadat asserted that Arab solidarity is not influenced by any defeatist analysis or reactions that we have overcome in October. President Sadat referred to the October generation which rejects defeatism and spurns the call of terror as well as nervousness and hysterical behaviour and always tends to know where the objective lies.

Asked when and how he decided to take this trip and if anybody was encouraging him to take that decision President Sadat said that no one knew about this decision except Vice-President and the Foreign Minister who accompanied him during his visit to Rumania, Iran, Saudi Arabia. Immediately, following my return, I took this decision which had been in the back of my mind all the time», President Sadat said.

**Question :** In case your visit (to the Knesset) fails, would a military solution and a military confrontation become inevitable ?

**Answer :** Not immediately. Matters are not tackle that easily. I repeat that the October generation does not tackle matters emotional-

ly or nervously. We study things calmly. For instance, what takes place there (during President Sadat's visit to the Knesset) shall be discussed by me with my colleague President Assad again because we re-assess the situation from time to time. Matters are not tackled nervously.

**Question :** Is there a unified Arab stance as regards this visit (to the Knesset) and will this matter be discussed at the Arab summit ?

**Answer :** The Arab summit will be held after three months (February, 1978). As regards this visit (to the Knesset) President Hafez (Assad) is not in favour. He is entitled to this. We have often differed on tactics but not on strategy. We shall never differ on strategy. I may see Arab interests and Arab strategy from a certain angle and President Hafez (Assad) may see it from another angle. I cannot impose my view on him and he cannot impose his on me. We sit together as colleagues. As I said, the October generation is free from all the sensitivities of the past. We talk things over in complete frankness. President Assad is not in favour. There are others in the Arab World who are bargaining. You know this and I need not go into detail. I do not ask for unanimous Arab approval. Otherwise, I would have asked for an Arab summit. Each is entitled to his opinion. What matters are results. To have different opinions on certain

matters is not harmful to the Arab stand. As I said, we all work for one aim.

**Question :** You said, Mr. President, that you had been contemplating the idea since your recent trip. Does this mean that you informed other leaders whom you met of this idea ?

**Answer :** No, not at all. I had the idea even before I went on my trip. It was a good opportunity to think it over. But I told no one of the idea in the three countries.

**Question :** Was it a good news that Israel agreed to your suggestion or was it a surprise to you ?

**Answer :** I have not yet evaluated that feeling. I feel that this is a sacred mission because as I have said (in recent press interviews) the alternative to peace is horrible.

**Question :** Has President Assad advised you not to make the visit ?

**Answer :** Why should he ask me not to go. Why should I ask him to do this or not do that. Everyone has his own opinion. This is not the way we deal with each other.

**Question :** You have requested amendments to be introduced in the American working paper. Have these amendments been introduced ?

**Answer :** I have received full clarification from President Carter, in spite of this I say again that procedural matters will not prevent me from going to Geneva. I am not interested in procedural matters. I am interested in the substance, namely two basic points : Withdrawal from occupied Arab territory and solution of the Palestinian problem and the establishment of a Palestinian state.

**Question :** Have you discussed your visit (to the Knesset) with the Americans before taking the decision ?

**Answer :** Not at all.

A large number of correspondents and representatives of the Information media who had come to Damascus, especially to cover President Sadat's visit to Damascus, attended the press conference.

**THE O**

(1)

**Egypt's Presi**  
peace on behal  
the entire Arab

The officia  
ing statement

President  
agreed to visit  
form the praye  
Aqsa Mosque.  
evening of Satu  
ber 19, 1977 in  
that he receive  
which was att  
invitation to hi

On Sunday  
November 20, 1  
the Corban Ba  
que with the P

Following  
ninsula in the F  
become the cus  
the Bairam pr



**STATEMENT BY  
THE OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN  
(17 November 1977)**

**Egypt's President responds to the call for peace on behalf of the legitimate demands of the entire Arab people :**

The official spokesman issued the following statement :

President Mohamed Anwar El Sadat agreed to visit Jerusalem where he will perform the prayers of the Corban Bairam at Al Aqsa Mosque. The visit will begin on the evening of Saturday 9 Thilhegga 1397, November 19, 1977 in accordance with the message that he received from President Carter and to which was attached the Israeli government's invitation to him.

On Sunday morning, 10 Thilhegga 1397, November 20, 1977, the President will perform the Corban Bairam prayers at Al Aqsa Mosque with the Palestinian people.

Following the liberation of the Sinai Peninsula in the Ramadan — October War, it had become the custom of the President to perform the Bairam prayers with its inhabitants and

the valiant soldiers and officers stationed there.

However, the call for peace based on justice impelled President Sadat to go this year and perform the Bairam prayers at Al Aqsa Mosque.

When the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt responds to the call for peace and decides to go to Jerusalem, he does so on behalf of the just and legitimate demands of the entire Arab people, and the people of Palestine, and to ward off the dangers threatening the inhabitants of the area, indeed threatening mankind as a whole and to spare the blood of victims and martyrs and stop the drain in sacrifice, effort and energy.

President Sadat, firmly believing in the justice of the Arab cause, answers the invitation to visit Jerusalem in the name of the national responsibility he shoulders, thus overstepping any kind of sensitivity in meeting his opponents, and in the meantime convinced that exposing the facts directly — as he will do at his meeting with the members of the Knesset next Sunday afternoon is more effective than to broach them in long and roundabout methods.

When the trip of peace takes place in an atmosphere like the one prevalent at present, namely after the Arabs had restored

their dignity through the October War, then it is taking place amidst circumstances unrestricted and ungoverned by the spirit of defeat or the fear of misinterpretation, particularly since it aims at reaching an overall solution to the Arab cause.

The historic responsibility which the leaders of the Arab nation should bear today, obliges them to work for the establishment of peace in the area, provided it is a just peace aiming at liberating the Arab territories occupied after the June 1967 defeat, and affirming the legitimate rights of the Palestinian Arabs.

President Sadat assumes his national responsibility, and will not let pass by any opportunity to reach this just peace.

May God grant the Arab nation every success in all the objectives it aspires to.