

PRESS CONFERENCE

held by

PRESIDENT ANWAR EL SADAT

in Bonn

March 31, 1976

Despite the important talks and the crowded programme of my trip during the past days, I have made use of some moments to develop my German language by reading what was written in the newspapers. I would like to thank you for your objectivity and your cordial comments.

The President added : I am happy to be present among you today not only to briefly acquaint you with our country's policy but also because I worked for years as a journalist.

The current position in the relations between our two countries is good and bears promising prospects.

I have had the opportunity to speak with President Scheel and Chancellor Schmidt and a number of other politicians where our talks were marked with good intent, cordiality and readiness for understanding between the two sides. I could recognise the agreement in our viewpoints in connection with the questions raised and the international themes that we dealt with. Consequently, I am of the firm belief that our bilateral and multi-lateral relations have acquired, during these talks, a positive strong push forward.

The President then referred to his visit to the other German states saying : I am pleased I was given an opportunity to see

your beautiful country and to contact its friendly people. I have not come to Germany only as a friend but as a messenger of friendship and peace. I will be back to my country fully convinced of the fact that these meetings and talks will effectively contribute to promoting peace as well as to strengthening ties of friendship between our two countries.

The President was asked whether he had discussed the question of supplying Egypt with arms.

President : I would like to state that I did not tackle the question of arms with Schmidt for a very simple reason, namely that Federal Germany is adopting a policy which I knew of before my coming here. That is why this question was not a subject of discussion between me and Chancellor Schmidt. I would also like to acknowledge that the aid we obtain from Germany is to be directed to the reconstruction process according to the programme we started in 1974 when we reopened the Suez Canal and restored the evacuees to the three cities of the Canal, even though they are within the reach of the Israeli artillery.

Nevertheless, I ran this risk for the sake of peace. The President went on to say that after the second disengagement of forces. It had become evident that we were proceeding in the direction of peace. I wish I could devote everything at my disposal to reconstruction, but I cannot, since part of our land is still occupied.

Question : You have spoken a lot about Palestine, and in favour of it. Did you refer in your talks with the German officials to this question of recognising the Palestinian Liberation Organisation ?

President : Yes, I have carefully examined this matter with Schmidt. In this connection, I do not want to overstep events, but I do accept what has been achieved so far, the rest will come at

future stage. This, of course, is left to Chancellor Schmidt, the German government and people to decide when it can conveniently take place. But I would like to say that I feel satisfied with the answer I received from Chancellor Schmidt.

Question : Did German aid fulfil Egypt's expectations ?

President : They have actually fulfilled a great deal of what Egypt expected from Germany. I am pleased with this. I would only like to add that our Arab brothers, as well as America and Iran also showed concern over this matter, and are participating in it. Thus I am happy with what was accomplished in Germany, and I hope that in forthcoming stages, higher figures can be reached.

Question : You said in America « hands off Lebanon » It is known today that Moscow's fingers were manipulating events in Lebanon. Then there was an American initiative, a European initiative and an Egyptian one a few days ago. What is your stand with regard to Lebanon at present, particularly as the situation therein is getting worse day after day ?

President : I would like to point out the fact that our policy is still the same namely « hands off Lebanon »; be they those of a foreign power, such as the Soviet Union, or those of an Arab power such as the Syrian Baath Party and the like. Upon Syria's failure to find a solution to the Lebanese crisis, and it was only natural that it should fail, since it solely works for the realisation of its private aims, just before my coming here I proposed that a joint Arab force, approved by Lebanon, be sent to Lebanon in an attempt for conciliating the conflicting parties.

I heard about the American initiative just as I read of the European one, and still I have no objection at all to any initiative be it American, European or Arab that might stop the flow of blood in Lebanon.

I am of the opinion that the entire responsibility for all that is happening in Lebanon is on the Lebanese leaders themselves, starting with the Head of State to the last of politicians. They alone have the power to work out a solution, because they should not have allowed the situation to reach this point. This was exactly what I said last April in Riad, but no one listened to me. Once more I repeat « Hands off Lebanon », and the leaders of Lebanon have to resolutely reach a decision and completely forget about their political disagreements.

As a President, I wish I could send a message to my friend President Franjeh : « I, as a Head of State, was obliged to humble my pride more than 10 times for the sake of preserving our homeland and our cause ». I wish this message could be communicated to him.

Question : Is there any change in the German stand with respect to the Arab cause ?

President : Certainly there is, especially after the nine European countries' statement was issued in November 1973, and the Foreign Minister's declarations some time ago which stipulated Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, and the establishment of a Palestinian entity. This is positively an attitude that is perfectly in support of the Arab cause.

Question : You always and persistently support the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, do you also side with the German people's right to self-determination ?

President : Of course I do, for principles never change.

Since we believe that peace is indivisible, the same is true of principles. That is why we support the German people's right to be united and to freely adopt what they want.

To a question about guarantees the President answered : I have discussed this at length with Chancellor Schmidt. I am very pleased to find a positive response on the part of Germany, in the sense that it would assume its responsibility in this concern. That is to say that if it were agreed to set up emergency forces on the frontiers to guarantee disengagement, and provide guarantees to both sides, Germany, as I understood from Chancellor Schmidt, will not be willing to participate, whereas in any other political moves, Germany is ready to shoulder its responsibilities fully.

Question : Have you agreed on all points, including Israel's right to live within its borders ?

President : The answer to this question lies in our acceptance of the resolution 242 issued by the Security Council in November 1967; the stipulations of this resolution are quite clear. I only object to one part of the question, namely covering the real meaning of expansion with the term « secure borders ». To us, the secure borders are those of 1967. There must be a clarity of vision since there will be no relinquishing one inch of Arab land.

Question : In an interview before your arrival to Germany, you stated that you are coming with things in your pocket to be submitted to Schmidt. Can you inform us of what these things might be ?

The President laughed and said : Yes, I have in fact numerous things in my pocket that I actually discussed with my friend Chancellor Schmidt; but unfortunately the time has not yet come to announce them. Yet you may learn of them in the future.

Question : As regards recognising the Palestine Liberation Organisation has the German government promised to recognise it in the future, or is that related to some conditions ?

President : As I said, this subject was discussed by Chancellor Schmidt and myself, but I do not have the right to say more about it. Still I have a word to say, namely that the Germans are a just people who agree with me in believing that setting pre-conditions for the P.L.O. is not logical since they are deprived of almost everything, they have no land or anything so it is unfair to set conditions to them. This was the remark I wanted to underline. Whilst with respect to what took place between me and Chancellor Schmidt, I previously pointed out that I am not in a position to announce it at present.

Asked about the substance of his talks in Germany as well as the points of agreement and disagreement referred to in these talks, the President replied :

« In my talks with Chancellor Schmidt, we made a comprehensive review of the bilateral relations between the two countries, of the situation in our area, the Arab-Israeli conflict and other problems in the region, in addition to international policy in general. I, in fact, feel perfectly satisfied since I found Chancellor Schmidt not only a politician, but a far-sighted professional statesman as well.

Moreover, this was also a good opportunity for me to meet my friend President Scheel whom I have known years ago when he visited Egypt.

So I reiterate the fact that I am completely satisfied with the talks I had here, because we agreed on every topic we discussed, and there was no point of disagreement between us.