

arbitration. Both leaders pledged to revive the comprehensive peace process, and declared 1987 as a year of negotiations for peace. The return of an Egyptian ambassador to Israel, Dr. Mohammed Bassiouny, was also announced (Egypt had withdrawn its ambassador after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982).

The following month witnessed a change of leadership in Israel. On 20 October, Likud leader Yitzhak Shamir was sworn in as Prime Minister replacing Shimon Peres (who became Foreign Minister) in keeping with the September 1984 coalition agreement. Shamir's return to this office - he held the post from October 1983 to September 1984 - signalled a hardening of the Israeli position toward peace.

Tensions in the region were heightened following a grenade attack on 15 October 1986, after a swearing-in ceremony for recruits of the élite Givati Brigade. Three grenades were tossed into the crowd, killing one man and wounding 65 others. Three groups claimed responsibility for the attack - the Democratic Front for the liberation of Palestine, Abu Nidal's Al-Fatah-Revolutionary Council, and the PLO. The PLO claim was issued from Cairo, prompting the Israeli Foreign Ministry to summons the Egyptian Ambassador the following day to lodge a protest.

On 16 October Israel retaliated for the Jerusalem attack with air and naval strikes against suspected PLO bases in the Palestinian district of Mieh Mieh on the eastern outskirts of Sidon.

Palestinian leaders in the territories maintained that the demonstrations were a reaction to provocations by Israeli military authorities - for example, the manning of checkpoints at Arab universities. Some Western observers believed the protesters were inspired by PLO successes in its fight against the Shiite militia Amal in south Lebanon, infusing Palestinian youth with a renewed sense of defiance.