

US endorsement of Palestinian self-determination, PLO acceptance of Resolution 242 and US dialogue with the PLO followed by multilateral negotiations. Two weeks later Israel announced its own peace plan, which called for negotiations between Israel, the US, Egypt, Jordan and non-PLO Palestinians. Lists of potential Palestinian representatives were exchanged in July, but agreement could not be reached on the presence of PLO members in the delegation.

The Middle East was discussed at the US-Soviet Geneva summit in October 1985, but no fresh proposals were advanced. In November King Hussein travelled to Damascus where he met with Syrian President Hafez Assad. Syria's consistent opposition to Jordanian-Israeli discussions which might leave the problem of the Golan Heights unresolved was reflected in the communiqué issued after the Damascus meeting, which rejected direct negotiations and partial solutions to the Arab-Israeli dispute.

Attempts to bring Israel and the Palestinians to the negotiating table were pursued nevertheless. In January 1986, the US Government agreed to invite the PLO to an international forum if the PLO would renounce terror and accept Resolution 242. When King Hussein brought this offer to Yassir Arafat, the PLO Chairman indicated that he could only accept Resolution 242 if Washington stated its support for Palestinian self-determination. Discussions continued until 19 February 1986 when King Hussein publicly blamed the PLO for the breakdown of the peace process and announced the suspension of Jordanian mediation efforts.

The meeting between Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres in Alexandria, on 11-12 September 1986, raised hopes for renewed efforts toward a Middle East peace settlement. The summit, the first between Egyptian and Israeli leaders in five years, temporarily resolved one outstanding dispute dividing the two countries - the ownership of Taba, a strip of beach along the Red Sea - by referring the matter to