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ICA Press Release

ICA Welcomes Middle East Peace Proposal

Geneva, Switzerland, 3 December 2003, for immediate release - The ICA welcomes the signing of the “Geneva Accord”, a blueprint for an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement. This Middle East peace initiative has received strong public support from a wide range of leading international figures including Nelson Mandela and former presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton from the United States and Lech Walesa from Poland.

Leaders of the ICA and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) were among the many public figures, political and cultural leaders and Nobel Prize laureates invited to join the Israeli and Palestinian delegations at the launch of the Accord in Geneva. The ICA and the ICFTU are among the largest non-governmental organisations in the world, and since 1946 have been recognised by the United Nations as leading civil society organisations.

“It is no accident that the leaders of ICA were invited to attend the launch”, said Dr Yehudah Paz, ICA Board member and Chairperson of the Negev Institute for Strategies of Peace and Development in Israeli. “The promotion of peace has been at the heart of international co-operation since its beginning in the 1890’s.”



Dr Yehudah Paz

The ICA draws its membership from over 100 countries. It includes members who practice the Christian, Moslem, Jewish and other faiths and beliefs. “The ICA has members in both Israeli and Palestine. We have sought to work together, whatever our differences, for the mutual benefit of all. Co-operation is obviously preferable to conflict – that has been our history and tradition”, he added.

Dr Paz, who has been involved with the Israeli peace movement for many years, noted that the ICA will be working to strengthen its ties with its co-operative members in both Israel and Palestine as part of its contribution to these peace efforts.

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The International Co-operative Alliance is an independent, non-government association which unities, represents and serves co-operatives worldwide. The ICA was founded in London in 1895. Its members are national and international co-operative organisations in all sectors of activity including, agricultural, banking, fisheries, housing, tourism, and consumer co-operatives. ICA has more than 200 member organisations from over 100 countries, representing more than 760 million individuals worldwide.