

“Meeting between Saddam and Political Advisors Regarding Hostilities with Israel, Iraqi Defense Capabilities, and Iraqi-Syrian Relations”



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Key: UM = Unidentified Male Speaker.

Translator comments, clarifications, and additions are italicized in brackets.

Tariq Aziz: [*Audio begins with Tariq Aziz in mid-sentence*]...the main points that Your Excellency said must be the subject of the opening speech because the summit was originally held to discuss the threats facing pan- Arab national security.

Saddam Hussein: And the introduction for it came through the threats facing Iraq.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, pan-Arab national security includes Iraq, the [*Jewish*] migration, and the threats facing the Palestinian issue, not only because of the migration but the effects of the migration as well.

Saddam Hussein: You know what they've been doing recently? Didn't I say it to you, Comrade Latif? Was it to you or to everyone here, or only to some of you? I told you that they will categorize the [*Jewish*] migration into two things: migration to the occupied territories of 1967, and migration to Israel. That's how the Americans will do it. Regarding the migration to the occupied territories: in their opinion, the occupied land is only the 1967 territories and it's separate from the migration to Israel. The migration to Israel, as if Israel were a real nation. For example—comparing it to the people of Iraq—if migration happens in Mosul then the people of Basra will not be effectively strengthened or weakened!

Tariq Aziz: This is not only America's position but Egypt's position as well. We wish it were solely an American position.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, you know how the situation is in Egypt.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, Sir, I am just saying this is the Arab countries' position. They initially did not object to migration to pre-1967 Israel, but they object to migration to the occupied territories of 1967. We'll talk about it -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: How can they do that?! For example, if there is an Israeli soldier sitting in his barracks in Haifa, wouldn't he be considered fighting us to expand Israel?

Tariq Aziz: Yes, this sounds right for us as Arabs, but the rest say this is a human rights issue and we can't resist it according to international law. The excuses they are bringing up are weak excuses.

Saddam Hussein: Right, international laws! As if international laws and human rights permit the occupation of Palestine! These are the worst human rights! These are American human rights!

Tariq Aziz: So, the subject of the opening speech is important. As for the agenda, there are two things: first is the formal and procedural issue, and the second is the subjective issue. For the formal and procedural issue, we will summon the [*Arab*] ministers and I will tell them that the agenda will be about the threats facing the pan-Arab national security, as suggested by Abu Ammar [*Yasser Arafat*].

Saddam Hussein: With its details as well.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, with the details as well. We, as the host country, have four proposed resolutions and we also have, as I will explain to Your Excellency and the comrades, a proposal for sending a letter from the summit to Gorbachev and Bush to correspond with the events. Now, when I suggest to them what I am suggesting now as a proposal, the Palestinian delegation will have an agenda about the Arab-Zionist conflict. They showed it to us and I saw it. We gave them some recommendations and told them not to scare the others with it yet because everything that the Palestinians print gets leaked so we told them to wait until everyone is here [*in Baghdad*] and then we will support them.

Saddam Hussein: But what you said will also be leaked!

Tariq Aziz: What I said?

Saddam Hussein: Yes! This will all be leaked!

Taha Yassin: Yes, this will all be leaked!

Tariq Aziz: What else can we do, Sir? When dealing with the Palestinians we're like [*the Arabic saying*] a person who has a razor blade hidden in his mouth and we can neither swallow it nor spit it out.

Saddam Hussein: When you give them recommendations about the Arab situation, only tell it to Abu Ammar when he is alone.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, but -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: He is the only one who can keep a secret!

Tariq Aziz: Yes, but Abdullah Hurrani and Azzam [*Azzam al-Ahmad, PLO Ambassador to Iraq*] came to me to discuss their agenda. Shouldn't I talk to them?! If I say we accept the agenda, then they will say we cooperated with Iraq. I mean we also want things to be smooth and successful. As for Jordan, I will make a deal with Marwan for him to talk about the Jordanian issue during the [*Arab*] ministers of foreign affairs meeting. They have their own problems and issues. So, when we talk about the summit, the things Comrade Mohammed said are important regarding the authenticity of what we had declared about not having our own specific and definite agenda. The agenda was determined through discussions and everyone who has any issue had the right to include it in the agenda.

Saddam Hussein: [*Speaking at the same time*] we determined the agenda in accordance with all the other ministers of foreign affairs. We don't have any special agenda.

Tariq Aziz: The issues that we, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, would suggest to be included and are not disputed are: first, we want a proposal for a resolution about the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, made by the summit according to the Iraqi-Arab understanding of non-proliferation which we called for.

Saddam Hussein: Let's discuss this.

Tariq Aziz: Let me finish the issues first.

Saddam Hussein: Alright. Go ahead.

[Time Stamp: 5:00]

Tariq Aziz: Second: A proposal for a resolution about the Arab rights to implement science and technology for the purpose of technological development and warning the countries that call for sanctions against it.

Saddam Hussein: These are necessary elements for defending our sovereignty, not only for development.

Tariq Aziz: Yes. We also have a proposal for a resolution regarding the situation between Iraq and Iran, which will be based on the previous resolutions. We also have a proposal for a resolution regarding supporting Iraq. These four, when we present them, are not disputed. They [Arabs] can't say, "We were not told about this," or something like that. We also have a proposal for sending a letter from the summit to President Gorbachev and Bush, which we already made. So, as I said before, the Palestinians will add their issues to the agenda. The same for Jordan and maybe Lebanon will also add their issues on the agenda if the tri-committee suggests it. Just like -- [Interrupted]

Saddam Hussein: How can we include Lebanon when neither the Lebanese government nor Lebanon's Sayed [referring to the Shiite Lebanese Hezbollah] are attending?

Tariq Aziz: The committee is authorized to include it as a suggestion but you all—the leaders—Sir, when you all meet you can say, "No we won't discuss it because there are no Lebanese attending." However, the ministerial tri-committee can include the suggestion.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, they can.

Tariq Aziz: For me—as Your Excellency directed—I will make the meeting of the [Arab] ministers of foreign affairs just a symbolic procedure. I won't let them discuss anything deeply. I won't let them sit to discuss politics and start analyzing things and so forth. I will tell them, "There is no need for this because our leaders will meet within 3-4 days."

Saddam Hussein: Yes, it won't be suitable for them.

UM: [Inaudible]

Tariq Aziz: Pardon me?

Saddam Hussein: Some of them, their ministers don't discuss anything.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, I don't want them to know through me what you are going to say at the summit. They shouldn't know it from Farouk al-Kaddoumi [*former Vice President of PLO*] either, although I'm not sure about him. But at least they won't get to know anything from me and I don't want to speak in depth because then they will know what we are going to say at the summit. The things Your Excellency mentioned about your speech will have a much better impact when they are said in front of the other [*Arab*] presidents.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, it'll be different. This is different.

Tariq Aziz: Even the other resolutions, such as the one for the [*Arab*] Defense Council. If you want to discuss them then it should be there at the summit, not with the ministers of foreign affairs because they'll be dead resolutions. This is coming from experience, not only talking about the Baghdad summit.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, this goes for everything.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, Sir. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is no longer dealing with anything outside of the traditional diplomatic framework. I mean, in the '50s and '60s, they would go to the Arab League to represent their respective countries' policies in a comprehensive way, although it wasn't that much. But currently, an [*Arab*] Minister of Foreign Affairs would say, "I don't have such things and I can't send a committee to New York to talk to the UN Secretary General." They can't commit to anything! They just say, "Yes," and then do nothing practical. So, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is unable to discuss issues of strategic importance. However, maybe it is different for me or Comrade Sa'doun because we are part of the leadership here and you have a strategy that we all know so we can discuss strategic issues. Even the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs—I was talking to him the other day during a meeting for the Arab Cooperation Council [*Tariq imitating Egyptian accent*—he said, "Let's not talk about military issues. I am not from the military. You know, war is something for the military people to talk about." So I told him, "My dear Dr. Ismat, we are talking about our strategies. This man, King Hussein, said today during lunch that it is likely Israel will attack us and he is asking what the Arabs should do about it. I am not talking to you about military issues. We are talking about politics. Isn't war a part of politics?" Anyway, we have such people and so we shouldn't discuss anything more than the agenda and reviewing the documents which will sure -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: [*Talking to his assistant*] Hamid, who is going to take this tape out of the recorder? Who takes it out?

Hamid: [*Inaudible*].

Saddam Hussein: Who is the guy?

Hamid: He is not here now, Sir. He will come later.

Saddam Hussein: I want you to tell me about how you take it out every day.

Hamid: Sir, you take it out and [*inaudible*].

Saddam Hussein: How do I do it? Tell me how?

Hamid: Right after the meeting, you just stop it and take it out.

Saddam Hussein: Like 15 minutes after the meeting, or like 5 minutes?

Hamid: No, right afterward.

Saddam Hussein: Right afterward. Just like this?

Hamid: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: [*Talking to Tariq Aziz*] Yes, go ahead.

[*Time Stamp: 10:12*]

Tariq Aziz: So, Sir, they will discuss the proposals for the resolutions that we presented -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: [*Talking to his assistant*] Where do you put it?

Hamid: [*Inaudible*].

Saddam Hussein: Good.

Tariq Aziz: They will discuss the proposal for the letter -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: [*Talking to his assistant*] We've talked about this before, but I wanted to double check how it works exactly.

Tariq Aziz: They are going to discuss the proposal for the letter to be sent to Gorbachev and Bush. They will also surely discuss the Palestinian agenda, and the Palestinians will be there, in addition to anything else that we present to the summit through the tri-committee. So we will, according to Your Excellency's directions, shape the meeting of the ministers of foreign affairs in a way that will not make it an obstacle for the summit or interfere with it.

As for what Your Excellency expects about discussing the location of the summit, anything can happen. I don't think this is an issue that anyone dares to talk about anymore, but what is going to happen at the meeting for the ministers of foreign affairs starting tomorrow when the Secretary General [*of the Arab League*] arrives is a new discussion about the Syrian president—how and who will go in a ministerial committee to convince him, and communicate with him, and let Mr. President call him personally, and so forth.

Saddam Hussein: This has never happened before. It never happened.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, but anyway we will hear their stories and suggestions which we will carry out for you, one by one.

Saddam Hussein: Let this be your limit. If the Syrian president wants to come, then we will send him an invitation. But if no one can guarantee for us that he or his deputy will be attending, then why are we sending him an invitation?

Tariq Aziz: Yes, this is what we all agree on.

Saddam Hussein: Because this is not publicly announced.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, but there is a possibility for one of the ministers to come to me and say, "King Fahad has assigned me to visit Mr. President." There are such possibilities and we all know it. As for the subjects of the summit, regarding how deep the discussions will be like Your Excellency mentioned. When the discussion is between you all—the presidents—then I think all subjects that Your Excellency mentioned are open for discussion. However, how much success are you all going to have in coming up with resolutions in a realistic and practical way?

Saddam Hussein: Not necessarily all of them, and not necessarily for all of them to be on the same level.

Tariq Aziz: Even regarding the Defense Council -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: I mean it will be a preparation for their mentality and -- *[Interrupted]*

Tariq Aziz: Even the issue regarding the Defense Council, in my opinion, should be discussed. If it won't be Your Excellency who will talk about it, then let it be King Hussein. Here comes the thing Your Excellency talked about last. For us, Sir, how do we describe the Arab situation collectively? For us, ten years ago after the Baghdad Summit -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: It is cold in here. Turn off the air conditioning.

Tariq Aziz: The Baghdad Summit -- *[Interrupted]*

Hamid: There's no air conditioning, Sir. We turned it off an hour ago.

Saddam Hussein: Double check that because when I went to the office, the air conditioning was on. I heard its sound. So, check it out.

Tariq Aziz: In regard to the Arab-Zionist conflict, the first Baghdad Summit was specifically designated for the Arab-Israeli conflict. All the resolutions during the Baghdad Summit, the political and strategic ones specific for the Arab-Zionist conflict, were not implemented except for one part of it, which is the monetary part! Everything else and the framework that the Baghdad Summit instituted for dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict was not implemented

because Iraq was engaged in a war. When Iraq engaged in a war, everyone else withdrew from dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict. I was hearing ministers of foreign affairs say things like, “What is Palestine?! Iraq is more important!” which is a deceitful way to talk because they don’t honestly share our views -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: It *[the war]* got the Arabs busy.

Tariq Aziz: Of course it did, but during that, what happened? The Camp David group was effective and now we are all recognizing the Camp David group as part of the Arab family. It is true that Hosni Mubarak is better than President Sadat -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: The Arabs are the ones recognizing it *[the Camp David group]*. A lot of the Arabs do.

Tariq Aziz: It is a group and the Camp David signatory is now once again a part of the Arab family. It’s here officially and we are all accepting it. It is true that President Mubarak is better than Sadat and he is in fact better, but part of the consequences for Camp David is what Your Excellency was condemning a few minutes ago about how migrating to Israel is acceptable and migration to the West Bank is not acceptable. This is because you are the leader of Iraq and you’re not committed like Hosni Mubarak to recognizing Israel, while he has an Israeli ambassador and he can’t object on the international level about the migration occurring in Israel because he recognizes the Jewish state and he can’t prevent any Jewish person in the world from traveling to Israel. He is not like us. We can object to the whole idea because we are not committed to anything with Israel. During that time period, the Palestinian resistance was great. We all know how the Palestinian resistance people were wearing Arab turbans when they attacked and threatened others in Lebanon, but now the Palestinian resistance is weak because it does not scare anyone. That’s why everyone is talking badly about it and no one is funding it. Otherwise, people like Abu al-Abbas *[Leader of the PLO]* would take money from state presidents—not by political rhetoric, but by threatening them because he had a support base in Lebanon and could send people, and so forth. Currently, the Palestinian situation is nothing like that old situation. *[Time Stamp: 15:55]*

However, the Iraqi victory, first in 1988 and followed by the developing of the Iraqi military, and then the recent Iraqi declaration—this created a new situation. However, this new situation was only understood by the fine civilians and officials who caught up with it and started analyzing it, so we are starting to hear some new opinions and visions but the ill-motivated, scared people, and collaborators are not ready for the new situation. That’s why, in my opinion, we are not going to achieve everything we want from the summit, practically speaking. However, the summit will elevate this performance, officially and at the street level, so that when we meet up in the next stage we will actually do something and we will work on a higher official capacity before the summit. In addition, for the next political summit, it is very important for us to see where it will be.

I suggest, so that there won’t be a political summit in Cairo next time—I suggest that Cairo be the location for holding an economic summit and we should discuss it. Remember the idea that we talked about and Your Excellency talked about it with the Secretary General of the Arab

League during the first economic summit in Amman and on many other occasions? So if we do that, moving the economic and other technical issues over for the Egyptians to enjoy it as if they are the experts in these issues, the next political summit will remain a backup for a practical strategic and political action corresponding to the Baghdad summit and within the same framework. It should also be at a non-aligned country and you all have options. Yemen will be united and they [*South Yemen and North Yemen*] may both come and say that they're now an Arab country and would like to hold the next Arab summit in Yemen. That's one option and we should consider it.

Saddam Hussein: But normally [*according to the Arab League rules*], the next summit should be in Saudi.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, normally it would be held in Saudi but we should consider it, Sir, as an idea so that the next political summit won't take place in Cairo, and we should keep the Egyptians busy with the economic summit.

As for the issue regarding the oil, we have to discuss the oil strategy in this meeting. I suggest that this summit should agree to hold another summit for the members of OAPEC [*Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries*] only. I mean, you, all the leaders, agree on another meeting for the leaders of the Arab oil countries, including Egypt, because it is a member of OAPEC as well, and we need to establish a strategy for oil policy in the next decade. I think this won't be rejected as a proposal, but it won't be taken seriously. Your Excellency suggested coordinating between Iraq, Saudi, and Kuwait, which happened, but Kuwait withdrew from it and the United Arab Emirates was not part of it. They are Arab countries who have an interest in what we are saying, but they are not part of the coordination. However, we have an organization for it. This is one of the things I have regarding the economic issues.

As for financial aid, I think that we should discuss it. Abu 'Ammar should cry out loud in the summit and say, "I am doing an Intifada [*revolt*] and I want money. You all agreed for it when we met in Algeria, but no one paid except for Saudi." King Hussein will surely discuss his issue and when he does, Your Excellency should help him.

Taha Yassin: [*Inaudible*]?

Tariq Aziz: Yes, exactly. Syria will benefit us by not attending.

Taha Yassin: [*Inaudible*].

Tariq Aziz: Thus, there won't be such a connection. Your Excellency does not want to say that we have financial debt and the debt is so and so, so you should not confirm anything. Sometimes, Sir, the right thing to say is better than the action itself—like the Mosul expression, "Apostasy, when used at the right time, can become a prayer! I mean, if something is said at the right time and place, it becomes as sharp and effective as a knife. However, Your Excellency should not stand up and come up with introductions about the issue. This is not something that Saddam Hussein would do, but you should keep it for its perfect time. Also, we will talk and have coffee with others privately so we can do it.

[Time Stamp: 20:34]

Saddam Hussein: However, the Arabs should know that this financial debt is actually financial aid but our brothers are now considering it debt.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, I can tell them. If you authorize us to talk about it, we'll do it because we'll see them and meet the ministers and other officials.

Saddam Hussein: We have already said we should make the Gulf nations aware that their governments are considering this as debt.

Tariq Aziz: Ministers of foreign affairs will come and we can talk about it and bring it up.

Saddam Hussein: Let's not do it in this summit. Let's keep it for ourselves.

Taha Yassin: [*Inaudible*]?

Tariq Aziz: No, let's do it in this summit when it's time for it. There is nothing wrong with that Mr. Taha. Don't think of it like we're begging them. We are not begging them.

Taha Yassin: [*Inaudible*].

Tariq Aziz: It's our discussion style that will make a difference. We will not discuss it in an aggressive way against them or in a begging way.

Taha Yassin: [*Inaudible*].

Tariq Aziz: We will propose it within the overall general situation as a required action. As for the suggestion coming from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Your Excellency regarding the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which you then referred to be discussed at the Command, this has been talked about recently -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Yes, if I may, Tariq.

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: We should also be able to learn how to deal with people. Everything you propose, in order for it to happen, we will have to pay something in return. Everything that the others propose, in order for it to happen, they will have to pay something in return. Isn't this how the world is working? So why are we different? What is forcing us to propose this idea and work on it ourselves?

Taha Yassin: [*Inaudible*].

Saddam Hussein: Let Israel propose it, or America propose it. I mean, we will propose it and I will include it in my speech, but we won't propose it as an Arab League resolution.

Tariq Aziz: It is beneficial for us, Sir.

Saddam Hussein: I know how much it benefits us and how much it hurts us. If they come up with a resolution now—we don't have an atomic bomb so if they come up with a resolution now, the Arabs will submit to it, but Israel has a bomb.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, this is what we want from it.

Saddam Hussein: When the resolution steps will be implemented, we will not be the ones implementing it. Who will supervise the resolution? It will be America, England, and France in addition to the Soviet Union, which they now control.

Tariq Aziz: No, Sir, if I may. During the Paris conference for chemical weapons -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: Tell me, what will we get more than embarrassing Israel and achieving our real intentions for the region to be clear of weapons of mass destruction?

Tariq Aziz: Yes, that's what I mean.

Saddam Hussein: But do you think it is better for us that we don't have weapons of mass destruction while about 20 other countries in the world have weapons of mass destruction?

Tariq Aziz: In our region?

Saddam Hussein: No, outside of our region.

Taha Yassin: Mr. President, if we have a war with Israel and both of us do not have chemical or nuclear weapons and we were able to defeat Israel, then they will be supplied with nuclear weapons right away.

Saddam Hussein: When we talk about, let's not talk about nuclear weapons – when we propose this issue and it becomes a reality controlled by our Egyptian brothers, then I am afraid it will turn into something against the Arabs because the Egyptian government is in a special situation pressured by the Americans. So, there is a difference between proposing something to embarrass others and to show our seriousness toward peace—when in fact all our weapons are defensive—than proposing something and working for it than paying for it ourselves.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, Sir, that's a separate issue and I would like to explain to Your Excellency—the reason which made us suggest something like this.

Saddam Hussein: That's what I think.

Tariq Aziz: For us, the thing that -- *[Interrupted]*

[Time Stamp: 25:00]

Saddam Hussein: Let me just finish what I am saying.

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: If we say today that we propose non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, won't creating a timeframe be the first thing they do? They will say, "Israel agrees to this and let's start with chemical weapons since the general attention is now toward chemical weapons." We will say, "No."

Tariq Aziz: We will refuse it and we have actually refused this before.

Saddam Hussein: We will refuse it and we have already done this. It is also understood around the world why we refuse to do this. So, if Israel suggests that we begin with the least lethal weapons up to the most lethal weapons, then what would we do to counter it?

Tariq Aziz: Sir, this will be left for the concerned parties. There will be nothing forced on a single party without the approval of all the other parties. This is currently happening with non-proliferation between the United States and the Soviet Union. Whatever they both agreed on, they then implemented and whatever they did not agree on was left undone. Now the Soviets are insisting on -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: You know what I would like to see? I want to see a day when the Israelis are told there must be non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction and then every weapon or rifle that gets to Israel is made accessible for Iraq to get as well. That's what I would like to see. However, if they do not proliferate weapons of mass destruction, but at the same time they are able to get the latest scientific and technological military innovations while the Arabs are sanctioned from such weapons like how they *[the West]* are now, chasing us for every part of artillery we get, then how are we supposed to face Israel?

Tariq Aziz: As far as I know, according to my estimation and our last analysis recently, we, the Arabs, now have an equivalent conventional firepower to Israel. That's what we understood from it.

Saddam Hussein: In quantity. But there are some things in which Israel is much advanced than the Arabs, such as remote firepower. Even for Iraq, Israel has F-16 and F-15 aircraft while our aircraft are not all at this level of technological advancement. They have interceptor missiles, would you even compare our interceptor missiles to the American ones? The answer would be no.

Taha Yassin: *[Inaudible]*.

Saddam Hussein: America is now working on creating Star Wars *[referring to the Strategic Defense Initiative]*. So, that's what I am talking about, Comrade Tariq. I am a person who does not want to put the Arabs in a situation that may lead them to defeat. Thus, why would we make the Arabs come collectively to adopt this resolution? It is an idea that we proposed and it went to the international level when the Egyptian President took it over to the United Nations. I mean,

the Arabs do not have chemical or atomic weapons, while Israel, even if it decides not to proliferate, has the experience to manufacture atomic bombs within six months. Then, what would the Arabs do? Israel can destroy all its weapons of mass destruction but at any time they can suddenly manufacture 20 bombs and then threaten the Arabs with these 20 bombs.

Taha Yassin: If war happens [*inaudible*].

Saddam Hussein: So, let's make this maneuver last for a longer time.

Tariq Aziz: So, in your opinion, we shouldn't make it as a resolution coming from the summit?

Saddam Hussein: Why would we make the summit come up with this resolution which will commit Arabs to it, when Israel has not yet agreed to anything?

Tariq Aziz: Yes, but we can make them commit to it in an article like Article Four which we were indeed committed to in Paris and we want to make it for all the Arab nations. This article "confirms that the Arab nations reject any attempts for the non-proliferation of only one type of weapon of mass destruction in the Middle East region. This will enable Israel to keep possessing other types of weapons of mass destruction, specifically the nuclear ones, which will in turn enable it to threaten and intimidate the Arab countries and endanger pan-Arab national security and world peace." This is what we wanted to confirm in the summit, in addition to confirming it in the summit letter to Bush and Gorbachev because neither the Soviet Union nor the United States agree on this. They understand our logic but do not agree on it because they say that chemical weapons are different from nuclear weapons and they refuse to relate them together. So we want take a position -- [*Interrupted*]

[*Time Stamp: 30:00*]

Saddam Hussein: They reject it because they have nuclear weapons, while we don't have nuclear weapons.

Tariq Aziz: Yes. We want to connect the Arab countries to this position and face these two powerful nations [*Soviet Union and the United States*] to say "No, we as Arabs utterly refuse this and we won't agree unless you relate the chemical weapons to the nuclear weapons."

Saddam Hussein: Comrade Tariq, if Arabs now had nuclear bombs wouldn't they retake all the occupied territories of 1967 without even fighting a war?

Tariq Aziz: We won't even insist on the chemical weapons issue.

Saddam Hussein: We won't insist on it but we do now because it is our only weapon.

Tariq Aziz: Yes. We are insisting on keeping it, Sir.

Saddam Hussein: Right. Right, but Israel still has the 1967 territories and Israel still has the expertise to manufacture nuclear weapons while the Arabs have nothing. We're discussing this as

an argument, not as a rejection of the idea, because we're the ones who proposed this issue originally, remember that?

Tariq Aziz: Yes, of course I remember it.

Saddam Hussein: I told you that we should propose this issue and relate it to other things in this way. Our long-standing position is that we reject this thing. A long time ago, you said, "Let's sign this agreement. So what?" But I said, "No, let's relate chemical weapons to the nuclear weapons first." There are even discussions in Congress now. There are people who are asking Quayle [*Dan Quayle, former U.S. Vice President*] about how Iraqis are relating these two things. So what does the government think about this? I mean, people are starting to.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, we created a unique situation in Paris.

Saddam Hussein: Guys, it's very cold in here! Huh?

[Audio is blank from 31:42 to 31:55]

Saddam Hussein: This table is surrounded by walls! Let's move to the other place.

Tariq Aziz: Sir, we created a collective Arab position -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: I haven't had lunch yet, and usually hungry people feel colder!

Ali Hassan: True!

Saddam Hussein: Just like the people who fast!

Ali Hassan: I also think your side of the room is colder!

Saddam Hussein: Anyway, Comrade Tariq, regarding this issue, so we don't waste more time discussing it, tomorrow morning when you all have had some rest, I want you to discuss it because maybe in five years Arabs will have a united nation capable of retaking the 1967 occupied territories without fighting a war. When they [*the West*] say, "Let's sit and discuss destroying the weapons of mass destruction," we'll say, "Alright, let's do it. But brothers, let's talk first about peace, and peace will never happen without getting back our rights which were abused."

Tariq Aziz: Yes, I have this on my mind too and I know it is on your mind as well, but we want it as a diplomatic commitment from the Arab countries and also to have it as a position -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: Yes, I am not rejecting the idea. However, I want to see if these ideas collectively do not require us to rethink our ideology because there is a difference between us proposing something with the situation all clear ahead of us and proposing something without having a clear situation ahead of us.

Tariq Aziz: Israel will never relinquish its atomic weapons. I believe Israel will be the one to reject this proposal because Israel will not remove -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: You know what American Congressmen are telling Quayle? They're asking him how many weapons of mass destruction do the Arabs have, and the ratio of the Israeli weapons to the Arab weapons is one to eight.

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: How would Israel face this imbalance without possessing an atomic bomb, when Arabs don't have any? This is it. So if this is their true logic then wouldn't Libya, which was attacked by America, have a strategic imbalance as well and deserve to own an atomic bomb to face America?

[Attendees are getting further from the microphone]

Tariq Aziz: This is what we -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: Or when Iraq faced Iran, wouldn't Iraq have a strategic imbalance and deserve to have weapons of mass destruction?

[Speakers are very far from the microphone]

End of Recording