

**FM Livni's remarks to the press at the UNGA in New York
12 November 2008**

The Middle East conflict is not the cause of extremism. The conflict and the violence are a result of the manipulation of religion and believers by extremist leaders who try to reap political benefits at the expense of innocent believers. The ones who pay the price are the believers themselves.

Today's event sends a very important message to the region, but messages alone are not enough. It's a necessary beginning, but certainly not the end. The beginning of a common struggle against extremists, before it's too late. The Middle East is paying a price because of the extremists living there. Israel will fight extremists, terror and extremism and, at the same time, continue to negotiate, as we are determined to do; we must continue these parallel tracks of counterterrorism and negotiation.

A piece of paper is not enough to achieve a genuine peace; we need to change the message conveyed in the mosques, prayer houses and schools. Extremism is not a gratuitous idea. The fight against extremists is common to the region's leaders. I know that some of the leaders in neighboring countries think it will be easier to live with the extremists, but they had better understand that when they shut their eyes to the hostility emanating from the mosques and the schools, it works against you as a leader, against your people, and against the possibility to bring peace. The change must happen also in our states.

We will continue to negotiate, we will continue to fight terror and extremism, and only when we do both simultaneously will there be peace.