

ZEHN JAHRE „GENFER INITIATIVE“

**Begrüßungsworte des Leiters der KAS Israel, Michael Mertes,
bei der Vortrags- und Diskussionsveranstaltung „Leading the Way to Peace“,
gemeinsam ausgerichtet von „Genfer Initiative“ und der KAS Israel
am 4. Dezember 2013 im Tel Aviv Museum of Art**

Members of the Knesset
Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen
Dear Friends:

On behalf of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, I warmly congratulate the Geneva Initiative on its 10th anniversary! Thank you very much for many years of close cooperation and friendship. We take pride in partnering with you – and we will continue supporting your great venture.

The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung is a German political foundation dedicated to dialogue and think-tank work. We are active around the globe with some 80 offices reaching out to more than 120 countries. We have been working in Israel for more than 30 years. Chancellor Angela Merkel is a member of our board.

There are three reasons why we are committed to the objectives of the Geneva Initiative:

- First of all, we share Chancellor Merkel's clear stance on Israel: Germany will never be neutral on Israel, and Israel can be sure of German support when it comes to ensuring its security.
- Secondly, we share the conviction of the Geneva Initiative that a fair two-state solution will be an asset to Israel's security – and to the stability of the region as a whole. Supporting the two-state solution has been a non-partisan issue in Germany since the early 1990s. This support is stipulated in the recent coalition agreement between the Christian Democrats, to whom we are close, and the Social Democrats in Germany.
- Thirdly, we feel encouraged by the fact that a majority of Israelis and Palestinians still support a two-state solution based on the principles of the Geneva Accord. We know this from public opinion research the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung has supported for many years on both sides.

The main problem with recent public opinion is what Dennis Ross has called the “dynamic of disbelief”. The Geneva Initiative stands for the dynamic of hope – a hope based on sober analysis.

Once again, dear friends, thank you so much for all you have done: your initiative – your persistence – your courage!

And may your vision come true very soon!