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Dr. Baramki accepts Award at ATFP Second Annual Gala

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Thank you Farah. Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen: I am very proud to receive this award from ATFP which stands for Choosing Peace and Embracing Hope.

This is a wonderful mission and Dr. Asali and his colleagues ought to be congratulated for the efforts that they have put forward. As I spent my first 16 years in my hometown of Jerusalem we lived under the cloud of the Balfour Declaration, which was mentioned by Mr. Safiyeh.

There a British foreign minister, Lord Balfour, promised a land which was not his to the Jewish people to establish a national home, but the second part of that declaration said "on condition that the indigenous population of Palestine would not be affected." And having lived there I know that the Palestinians have suffered and still do suffer immensely and I'm glad to realize that President Bush is finally on the track that a Palestinian state would be a thing to do.

I think a Bush declaration especially during the upcoming meetings between this Israelis and the Palestinians in Annapolis, Maryland if he makes a Bush Declaration this would balance the Balfour Declaration and correct some of the injustices that have been done to the Palestinian people.

We all dream of having an independent Palestine living side by side with the state of Israel in harmony and peace.

Let us hope that the next Gala we'll all celebrate the existence of an independent and prosperous Palestine.

Again, thank you very much for this award, I'm proud of it. I'm proud of the mission that you

are accomplishing. And let us continue to go forward.

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