

## **Egypt agrees with Israel and US to create seven Qualified Industrial Zones**

Cairo, Friday 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2004

Under the terms of an agreement to be signed in Cairo on 14<sup>th</sup> December, Egypt, Israel and the United States will approve the creation of seven Qualified Industrial Zones in geographic locations throughout Egypt.

The seven zones will be located in the 10<sup>th</sup> Ramadan industrial zone, the 15<sup>th</sup> May industrial zone, Shubra El Khaima, El Badrasheen, Borg El Arab, El Amreyah and Port Said.

Egypt's Government is currently preparing for the visit to Cairo, next week, by US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick. Ambassador Zoellick travels to Cairo for the signing of the QIZ agreement with Egyptian Minister of Foreign Trade and Industry, Rachid Mohammed Rachid and his Israeli counterpart, Ehud Olmert.

Viewed in Egypt as a stepping towards securing a final Free Trade Agreement with the United States, QIZs will be instrumental in Egypt's efforts to encourage growth, increase exports and attract foreign direct investment. They are expected to deliver tangible benefits to ordinary Egyptians in the form of job opportunities, an improved standard of living and peace.

The agreement has already been welcomed by Egypt's textile manufacturers, with public celebrations taking place on Wednesday, in cities such as Port Said. However, while textile manufacturers are the most immediate beneficiaries of QIZs, Egypt's Government is actively encouraging a diverse range of industries to capitalize on access to the US market and embrace the challenge of integrating their local ventures into the global economy.