

RELEASE IN FULL

CONFIDENTIAL

August 20, 2010

For: Hillary
From: Sid
Re: Pat Lang's view

Pat's view in summary is this: The Palestinians will not and cannot negotiate toward a resolution that is not stated as the objective beforehand, that this was a fatal flaw at the 1999 Camp David meetings. He believes this is not only a political imperative for them but also a psychological one. Obama's initial no-settlements declaration was a non-starter, thrown into a vacuum. Launching direct talks without clear conditions, Pat thinks, is doomed to failure. Given that the talks are engaged, he thinks that the U.S. should privately state its detailed position on final boundaries and Jerusalem at the beginning, making clear that these are the conditions. The U.S. must be insistent, especially with Israel, playing very firm and tough, or else the talks will collapse, which is likely the Israeli objective. Abbas has agreed to the talks out of basic weakness. If the talks fail, he will be drastically discredited and the political prestige of Hamas and Hezbollah greatly increased. That will serve Israel's purposes, which are to see the talks fail and use their failure as a launching pad for the next stage against Hamas and Hezbollah.