

RELEASE IN PART
B1,1.4(D),B6

From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
Sent: Saturday, October 2, 2010 10:44 AM
To: H
Subject: Fw: (SBU/NF) Update on Palestinian leadership meetings

Fyi. A mixed bag. Some problematic statements have come out, but [redacted] there was no decision to declare an "end" of talks. We'll keep monitoring the press on this to see if it heads in the wrong direction.

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B1

From: Rubinstein, Daniel H
To: Feltman, Jeffrey D; Hale, David M; Walles, Jacob; Rudman, Mara; 'Daniel_B. Shapiro [redacted]
[redacted]; Sutphin, Paul R; Sullivan, Jacob J; 'george [redacted]
Cc: Schlicher, Ronald L; 'Prem_G. Kumar [redacted]; Cunningham, James B;
Beecroft, Robert S (Amman); Scobey, Margaret
Sent: Sat Oct 02 10:25:36 2010
Subject: (SBU/NF) Update on Palestinian leadership meetings

B6

(U) A joint meeting of the Fatah and PLO leadership concluded earlier this afternoon. We've spoken with several of the thirty-five who were in attendance, and will send additional readouts if warranted later on.

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~ Reason: 1.4(D) ~ Declassify on: 10/01/2025

Update on Joint PLO/FCC Meetings

(SBU/NF) According [redacted] Abu Mazen reprised the situation for participants, explained that the Palestinians had entered direct negotiations "out of conviction," and blamed the GOI decision to not extend the moratorium for the current situation. Abu Mazen outlined the themes for the public statement – engagement with the USG will continue; GOI responsibility for derailing the peace process; and continued commitment to the two-state solution. On security, Abu Mazen reportedly gave a strong message regarding zero tolerance for violence, particularly near points of friction with the IDF, including stone-throwing. He rebuffed inquiries into what "historic decisions" he plans to announce in his October 9 speech [redacted] As expected, PFLP (which formally suspended its participation in the PLO Executive Committee a week ago) boycotted the session [redacted]

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[redacted] described the meeting as non-contentious, and predicted that some participants would undoubtedly stray from the agreed-upon public line to say decisions had been taken at the meeting. Abbas goes to Amman later today to see King Abdullah (meeting tomorrow), will see EGIS's Omar Suleiman Monday night in Cairo to be followed by President Mubarak on Tuesday, and then returns back to Amman briefly before heading on to Sirte.

(SBU) After the meeting, Presidency Spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeineh was quoted by Ma'an news agency as saying "there will not be negotiations without a stop to settlements." FCC member Mohammed Dahlan also gave a brief statement holding Israel responsible and mentioning that Fatah has unspecified "other alternatives."

Atmospherics

(SBU/NF) [redacted]

[redacted]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] As one contact put it, the GOI "has shown that there is no horizon on either the political or security tracks. They have not given anything on incursions, arrests, weapons delivery, extension of PA responsibilities outside area A, or prisoner releases."

(SBU/NF) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(SBU/NF) To the extent we do detect much Palestinian thinking about the way forward, it does not appear to focus on how to salvage negotiations, but rather what the Palestinians do now that they have broken down [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] On the bright side, none of the senior Fatah leadership seem to be advocating a return to violence, and last week's tenth anniversary of the start of the Second Intifada passed without much notice in the West Bank, though Hamas and PIJ organized events in Gaza. These dynamics are generally reflective of the public mood – today's (admittedly unscientific) Al Quds online poll shows 88% of respondents placing the chances of success for negotiations at "zero," while yesterday's poll showed over half of respondents believe Abu Mazen will resign at the upcoming AL Summit. The Ma'an piece below (which carried a different title in Arabic – "Don't Do It, Mr. President!") is reflective of where the debate in many quarters is currently focused.

Abbas, it is not yet time - Nasser Lahham Published today 09:48

On the presidential plane, President Mahmoud Abbas sat among assembled journalists and said this would be the last time we traveled with him.

We were all silent.

At 32,000 feet above Turkey, a stream of questions came after the stunned silence, but he was reticent to answer. I looked to his advisor, Akram Haniyeh, searching for a clue, but his body language revealed nothing, anything he knew was concealed.

Regardless of the validity, or invalidity, of the desire or unwillingness of the president to step down, his resignation will be blow to his people.

In relinquishing office, Abbas would gain on a personal level, as will his family, and the TV channels that attacked him will sing his praise. Poetry will be written for him from London to Qatar, and he will be honored in Arab capitals, Europe, and Africa as a hero who stepped down against US imperialism. Statements will be issued in Gaza and Damascus, while leaders in Ramallah will celebrate a new opportunity to rule.

But Palestinians will suffer.

If Abbas is looking solely at his personal interests, he should resign now. He will be honored like Arafat, and will enter the history books for his resolve against the US and Israel.

But chaos will prevail among Palestinians, who will have no leader that they have chosen. Hamas and Fatah still disagree on everything, and internal dissent within both parties remains strong. Hamas is torn between the party and its leaders, and between Gaza and Damascus.

Without funds from Qatar and Iran, Gaza's government would collapse in minutes. Without the president's legitimacy and money from the West, Prime Minister Salam Fayyad's government would do the same.

Most importantly, neither leadership has an alternative plan to govern. In spite of what is said, Palestinian leaders are not ready to agree.

Palestinians want national unity and elections. Once that is achieved - if Abbas and the current leaders want to resign - then may God be with them. And with Abu Mazen, Palestinians would love Hamas leaders, and the leaders of other factions who bear the responsibility for the internal crisis, to resign as well.

Today, however, Abbas must not leave his people with an authority without authority, with a treasury without money, a sea without a port, villages without agriculture and cities without roads. He must not leave us fighting over meaningless positions, in ministries whose only sovereignty comes from the military occupation, in an underground tunnel that has not yet seen the light of freedom.

Nasser Lahham is the editor-in-chief of the Ma'an News Agency.