

RELEASE IN FULL

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Subject: Draft on settlements ready for UN - Palestinians (Reuters)

BETHLEHEM (Reuters) - A Palestinian Authority draft resolution condemning Israel's West Bank settlement activity is ready to be presented to the UNSC, a senior Palestinian Authority official said. Saeb Erekat, the chief Palestinian Authority negotiator in peace talks with Israel, said he expected the resolution would be put to a UNSC vote in February, after the United States ends its presidency of the council. "We are not condemning Israel. We are condemning settlement activities and we hope the resolution will pass," Erekat said. He said 15 nations had helped draft the proposal after Palestinian Authority President Abbas requested a UNSC meeting to discuss settlement building in November. "Something must be done on the international level to halt the settlement expansion which the Israeli government is undertaking in the West Bank, including Jerusalem," Nabil Abu Rdainah, Abbas's spokesman, said at the time. As the Palestinian Authority has only observer status at the UN, the resolution will be presented by a full member of the council. Erekat said he hoped the United States would not use its veto to defeat the resolution and added that if it did not succeed at the UNSC, "we will go to the International Court of Justice."