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**From:** Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 4, 2011 7:14 AM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** Fw: Palestinians 'moving ahead' with UN bid: Erakat (AFP)

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**From:** OpsNewsTicker  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 04, 2011 06:51 AM  
**To:** NEWS-NEA; NEWS-Mahogany  
**Cc:** SES-O  
**Subject:** Palestinians 'moving ahead' with UN bid: Erakat (AFP)

Palestinians are determined to go ahead with their UN membership bid as an Arab League follow-up committee endorsed a final draft of the request to be presented to the UN General Assembly, a top official said.

Saeb Erakat brushed off as a public relations stunt Israeli attempts to lure the Palestinians back into peace talks based on the 1967 borders if they abandon the UN membership campaign.

"The Palestinian train is now heading towards New York," Erakat, the chief Palestinian negotiator, told AFP during the committee's meeting in Doha, Qatar, late on Wednesday.

After the meeting, Erakat said the members of the committee "have reached a final agreement to request the full support for a Palestinians state within the 1967 borders with its capital Jerusalem."

The request "will be ready to present before the next UN General Assembly session" in September, said Erakat.

The committee members had also agreed to "double their efforts to garner support from members of the UN Security Council," he added.

Erakat played down statements by an Israeli government official who said Tuesday his country was willing to begin new peace talks based on the 1967 lines if the Palestinians drop their UN membership bid.

He said the statements were "leaked" from the office of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin, dismissing them as a PR exercise.

Talks between Israel and the Palestinians have been on hold since last September, grinding to a halt shortly after their relaunch earlier the same month over the issue of settlement construction.

Israel has declined to renew a partial settlement freeze that expired shortly after the direct talks began, and the Palestinians have said they will not negotiate while Israel builds on occupied land they want for a future state.

With the talks on ice, they have instead pushed forward with the plan to seek UN membership for a Palestinian state.

Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas has insisted the plan does not rule out the possibility of new peace talks, but said he will not negotiate without a settlement freeze and a clear set of parameters for any new talks.

Faced with the promise of a Security Council veto by the United States, which is pressing the Palestinians to resume stalled negotiations with Israel instead, Erakat urged the US government to "reconsider its position."

The Arab League follow-up committee, which groups the Palestinian Authority, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Lebanon, is chaired by Qatar.

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