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From: OpsNewsTicker
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Subject: PM: Palestinians doing all they can to avoid peace talks (Jerusalem Post)

(Jerusalem Post) - Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu on Monday blamed the Palestinians for the impasse in the peace process, saying "I'm ready to begin negotiations immediately, but the Palestinians are doing all they can to avoid direct negotiations," Israel Radio reported.

Speaking during a meeting with his Belgian counterpart Yves Leterme, Netanyahu said that the Palestinian refusal to begin negotiations was an error on their part "because they need peace as much as we do." The prime minister stated that he was willing to go to Ramallah for peace talks.

The prime minister added that the Palestinian plan to seek recognition of a state at the UN in September would only serve to push back the cause of peace.

Leterme pledged Belgium's help to the Israelis and Palestinians and voiced his belief that the sides must enter negotiations in order to promote peace between them.

Netanyahu's comments came after Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas told the Fatah Revolutionary Council in Ramallah on Sunday that the PA was prepared to listen to any proposals that would lead to the resumption of peace talks with Israel.

Abbas reiterated his position that the peace talks should be based on a full cessation of construction in the settlements and acceptance of the pre-1967 lines as the borders of a Palestinian state. He also said that the talks should have a clear and acceptable timetable.

He said that the PA's statehood bid was not aimed at isolating or delegitimizing Israel.

"The goal is to delegitimize occupation which must end," he explained. "The Palestinians are the only people in the world who have remained under occupation."

Abbas added that the Palestinians have "knocked on all doors seeking the resumption of the peace talks, which is our first, second and third option."

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