

Statement of the Middle East Quartet

Media Note , Office of the Spokesperson, Washington, DC, September 23, 2011

Following is the text of a statement issued after the meeting of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, and EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the European Union Catherine Ashton in New York on September 23, 2011.

Begin text: The Quartet takes note of the application submitted by President Abbas on 23rd September 2011 which is now before the Security Council.

-The Quartet reaffirmed its statement of 20th May 2011, including its strong support for the vision of Israeli-Palestinian peace outlined by United States President Barack Obama.

-The Quartet recalled its previous statements, and affirmed its determination to actively and vigorously seek a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, on the basis of UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, 1397, 1515, 1850, the Madrid principles including land for peace, the Roadmap, and the agreements previously reached between the parties.

-The Quartet reiterated its commitment to a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East and to seek a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and reaffirms the importance of the Arab Peace Initiative.

-The Quartet reiterated its urgent appeal to the parties to overcome the current obstacles and resume direct bilateral Israeli-Palestinian negotiations without delay or preconditions. But it accepts that meeting, in itself, will not reestablish the trust necessary for such a negotiation to succeed. It therefore proposes the following steps:

1. Within a month there will be a preparatory meeting between the parties to agree an agenda and method of proceeding in the negotiation.
2. At that meeting there will be a commitment by both sides that the objective of any negotiation is to reach an agreement within a timeframe agreed to by the parties but not longer than the end of 2012. The Quartet expects the parties to come forward with comprehensive proposals within three months on territory and security, and to have made substantial progress within six months. To that end, the Quartet will convene an international conference in Moscow, in consultation with the parties, at the appropriate time.
3. There will be a Donors Conference at which the international community will give full and sustained support to the Palestinian Authority state-building actions developed by Prime Minister Fayyad under the leadership of President Abbas.
4. The Quartet recognizes the achievements of the Palestinian Authority in preparing institutions for statehood as evidenced in reports to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, and stresses the need to preserve and build on them. In this regard, the members of the Quartet will consult to identify additional steps they can actively support towards Palestinian statehood individually and together, to secure in accordance with existing procedures significantly greater independence and sovereignty for the Palestinian Authority over its affairs.
5. The Quartet calls upon the parties to refrain from provocative actions if negotiations are to be effective. The Quartet reiterated the obligations of both parties under the Roadmap.
6. The Quartet committed to remain actively involved and to encourage and review progress. The Quartet agreed to meet regularly and to task the envoys and the Quartet Representative to intensify their cooperation, including by meeting prior to the parties' preparatory meeting, and to formulate recommendations for Quartet action.