

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, October 5, 2010 10:38 AM
To: H
Subject: Fw: (Haaretz) Netanyahu urges top ministers to extend settlement freeze

From: Deyo, Justin A
To: NEWS-Mahogany; SES-O_Shift-I
Cc: NEWS-NEA; SES-O_OS
Sent: Tue Oct 05 05:35:51 2010
Subject: (Haaretz) Netanyahu urges top ministers to extend settlement freeze

(Haaretz) Netanyahu urges top ministers to extend settlement freeze

PM to convene inner cabinet on Tuesday for vote on a 60-day moratorium in exchange for U.S. guarantees.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will convene his forum of top ministers on Tuesday afternoon to debate extending Israel's moratorium on construction in West Bank settlements for 60 days.

The concession would be made in exchange for a series of reported U.S. guarantees in Israel's direct peace negotiations with the Palestinians. Israel halted construction temporarily for 10 months, a freeze that ended on September 26.

The Palestinians have said they would not continue the recently renewed negotiations unless Israel agreed to halt construction again. The Obama administration has urged Israel to reconsider its refusal of that demand.

If Netanyahu succeeds in convincing the Forum of Seven to accept an extension of the construction freeze, he plans to bring the matter to the political-security cabinet for a vote later Tuesday.

Defense Minister Ehud Barak (Labor) and Intelligence and Atomic Energy Minister Dan Meridor (Likud) are expected to support Netanyahu's position, while Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman (Yisrael Beiteinu) is likely to present the greatest opposition.

Netanyahu is pinning his hopes now on Ministers Benny Begin (Likud), Moshe Ya'alon (Likud) and Eli Yishai (Shas). The prime minister has already met with Begin over the last few days in an attempt to convince him to change his previously expressed opposition to extending the freeze.

Justin Deyo
U.S. Department of State
Operations Center (S/ES-O)
202-647-1512