

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, September 5, 2011 11:35 AM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Abbas met Israel's Barak - Palestinian official (Reuters)

FYI

From: OpsNewsTicker
Sent: Monday, September 05, 2011 10:31 AM
To: NEWS-Mahogany; NEWS-NEA
Cc: SES-O
Subject: Abbas met Israel's Barak - Palestinian official (Reuters)

RAMALLAH (Reuters) - Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas met Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak last week, Palestinian officials said on Monday, his first publicly declared meeting with an Israeli government official for almost a year.

Abbas told members of Fatah's Revolutionary Council that Barak had requested the meeting in Jordan to discuss the possibility of resuming negotiations which broke down a year ago because of a row over Jewish settlement expansion.

"The meeting did not produce any result," a Fatah official who heard him speak told Reuters, declining to be named because the meeting had been closed to the media. Israel's Defence Ministry had no immediate comment.

With the peace process at a standstill, Abbas is planning to seek U.N. endorsement of Palestinian statehood at New York's General Assembly meeting later this month.

Israel and the United States, its main ally, are both opposed to the move. Israel sees it as an attempt to undermine its own legitimacy. The United States says the step is unhelpful to efforts to revive bilateral talks.

The Palestinians say U.N. endorsement of statehood in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, while changing nothing on the ground, will strengthen their position in future peace talks with Israel, among other benefits.

NewsTickers alert senior Department officials to breaking news. This item appears as it did in its original publication and does not contain analysis or commentary by Department sources.