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From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
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Subject: Turkey refuses US mediation in crisis with Israel (AFP)

ISTANBUL (AFP) — Turkey does not need United States' mediation to solve a long-lasting crisis with Israel over a deadly 2010 flotilla raid, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said on Saturday.

"We do not need mediation ... for Israel in any way," Davutoglu said during a televised press conference in the central province of Konya when asked to comment on the possibility of the US helping to resolve their differences.

"There is no such situation in which mediation is needed. The demands of Turkey are clear" if its former ally Israel wants to improve relations, Davutoglu said.

"No one should test our resolve on this matter," he said, adding that Israeli-Turkish relations might be on the agenda among other issues of a meeting between Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and US President Barack Obama next week on the sidelines of the UN general assembly.

"The Americans are probably the people who best understand Turkey's position on this issue," Davutoglu added.

Israel and Turkey have been locked in a bitter dispute since May 2010 when Israeli naval commandos stormed a convoy of six ships trying to reach the Gaza Strip in defiance of an Israeli naval blockade, killing nine people. Earlier this month Turkey expelled the Israeli ambassador and froze military ties and defence trade deals. Relations plummeted still further when Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan threatened to send warships to escort any Turkish vessels trying to reach Hamas-ruled Gaza.

Obama will discuss the political crisis in Syria and wider turmoil throughout the Middle East in talks in New York on Tuesday with Erdogan, deputy US national security advisor Ben Rhodes said on Friday. Obama will also likely address the rift between Turkey and Israel

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