

A Palestinian Official Said This U.S. Request Was 'Insane'

Senior Palestinian Authority (PA) official Nabil Shaath unequivocally rejected President Donald Trump's request to end the PA's policy of paying stipends to Palestinian terrorists and their families, calling the proposal "insane."

In an interview Thursday with Israel Radio, Shaath equated the PA's payments to Palestinian terrorists with salaries Israel provides to members of the IDF.

"It's absurd to request that we stop paying the families of prisoners," Shaath said. "That would be like asking Israel to stop paying its soldiers."

The PA official also said the American request to stop the payments to terrorists represents a tactic to undermine prospects for renewed Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations.

Shaath's comments came a day after White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer told reporters Trump sought to "resolve" the controversial PA policy with Abbas when the two leaders met Wednesday.

The PA official's statements also follow calls by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. lawmakers for the PA to end the terror payments.

"President Abbas ... How can you speak of peace with Israel and at the same time fund murderers who spill the blood of innocent Israelis at every turn?" Netanyahu told Fox News last month. {eo}

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