

President Trump's Middle East Peace Team Is Making Progress

President Donald Trump's son-in-law, White House Senior Adviser Jared Kushner, will be returning to the United States reportedly having made some progress in his efforts to advance the president's Middle East peace agenda.

Kushner, joined by Special Representative for International Negotiations Jason Greenblatt and U.S. Ambassador to Israel David Friedman and Consul General to Jerusalem Donald Blome, has met with both Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. Both sides have committed to further discussions, according to the White House.

The Middle East Peace Team first met with the Israeli leadership on Wednesday. The following is the White House readout from that meeting:

Senior Adviser to the President Jared Kushner, Assistant to the President and Special Representative for International Negotiations Jason Greenblatt and United States Ambassador to Israel David Friedman met today in Jerusalem with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel and his senior advisers. The meeting was productive and the two sides reaffirmed their commitment to advancing President Trump's goal of a genuine and lasting peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians that enhances stability in the region. The three United States officials discussed Israel's priorities and potential next steps with Prime Minister Netanyahu, acknowledging the critical role Israel plays in the security of the region. The United States officials and Israeli leadership underscored that forging peace will take time and stressed the importance of doing everything possible to create an environment conducive to peacemaking.

They then met with Abbas and PA leaders in Ramallah. This was the White House's description of that meeting:

Senior Advisor to the President Jared Kushner, Assistant to the President and Special Representative for International Negotiations Jason Greenblatt and United States Consul General in Jerusalem Donald Blome met today in Ramallah with President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority and his senior advisers. The two sides had a productive meeting and reaffirmed their commitment to advancing President Trump's goal of a genuine and lasting peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians that enhances stability in the region. Kushner and Greenblatt discussed with President Abbas priorities for the Palestinians and potential next steps, acknowledging the need for economic opportunities for Palestinians and major investments in the Palestinian economy. The United States officials and Palestinian leadership underscored that forging peace will take time and stressed the importance of doing everything possible to create an environment conducive to peacemaking. Kushner and Greenblatt plan to return to Washington, D.C. to brief President Trump, Secretary Tillerson and General McMaster and to continue the conversation about next steps. {eo}