

Palestinians Seek Israeli Concessions to Renew Peace Talks

The Palestinian Authority is seeking a number of confidence-building measures from Israel before the restart of peace negotiations. Among the measures are the release of Palestinian prisoners arrested before 1994, the provision of ammunition to Palestinian security forces and the removal of checkpoints.

In an interview broadcast on the Arabic language Sawa radio station, Nimer Hamad, a political adviser to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, said that Abbas gave U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry a document listing the trust-building steps sought by the Palestinian Authority during their meeting in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on Monday.

The list included the transfer of security control of Palestinian areas from the Israel Defense Forces to the Palestinian police, the release of Palestinian funds frozen by Israel and the renewal of VIP identification cards for Palestinian officials that were cancelled.

According to Hamad, the Palestinian Authority is pleased that U.S. President Barack Obama intends to put greater focus during his second term on renewing the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians. Hamad said that trust-building steps by Israel would allow for peace negotiations to be restarted in a "positive atmosphere."

Hamad said that, as far as he knew, Kerry spoke with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about the measures and Netanyahu did not rule them out. According to the Palestinian media, Jordanian officials have said that Netanyahu and Jordanian King Abdullah discussed possible trust-building steps during a

secret meeting in Amman last week.

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