

**ABBAS AT UN: EARTH DOESN'T MOVE AS ISRAEL (AND US)
AVERT "TSUNAMI"**

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Isranet Daily Briefing, October 4, 2011

<https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/abbas-un-earth-doesnt-move-israel-and-us-avert-tsunami/>

The month of September has come and gone, and the political "tsunami" that many predicted would devastate Israel never materialized. Instead, Palestinian Authority president Mahmoud Abbas' attempt to gain a unilateral declaration of independence ("UDI") at the United Nations was dampened by US president Barack Obama's opposition to the move, and by Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's steadfast refusal to make further concessions, at the behest of the "international community," to a PA that continues to reject Israel's legitimacy. Despite the Palestinians' "UDI" gambit, the Israeli government has nonetheless accepted the Quartet's recent proposal to resume direct negotiations "without delay or preconditions," a motion summarily rejected by an uncompromising Mahmoud Abbas.

**THERE WAS NO POLITICAL TSUNAMI
FOR ISRAEL AFTER ALL**

Moshe Arens

Haaretz, September 28, 2011

The month of September is...gone and Israel does not lie devastated like north-eastern Japan after the tsunami that hit that region in the wake of a 9.0 magnitude earthquake last March. Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas submitted an application to the United Nations that Palestine be recognized as a state and admitted to the UN. Hamas, as was expected, objected to this move, and President Barack Obama said what any sensible person should have known—that bypassing direct negotiations by applying to the UN was not going to advance peace between Israel and the Palestinians. It turns out that the tsunami predicted to hit Israel in the month of September went the way of so many other predictions that have been made about the Middle East in recent years.

The hero of the drama that played out at the UN was undoubtedly Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, but not because he meddled in U.S. internal politics, encouraging the Republicans to criticize Barack Obama's policy toward Israel—he knows better than to attempt to do

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that (the Republicans, and even many Democrats, need no outside encouragement to fault Obama on this subject). Netanyahu is the hero because he did not allow himself to be spooked by the panic-stricken warnings coming from all directions that a tsunami was approaching and that he should advance "daring" initiatives before the tsunami hit Israel. Everybody knows what was meant by "daring" initiatives—announcements of concession that Israel was prepared to make to the Palestinians before the start of negotiations; that he would freeze construction in the West Bank; or, better yet, that he would uproot settlements there, or that he would agree that the April 1949 armistice lines with Jordan ("the 1967 lines") would be the basis for negotiations with Abbas. He kept a cool head, and did none of that.

There was another actor in this drama at the United Nations. Little known, but possibly important—Anthony Weiner, the Democratic Congressman, representing the ninth New York Congressional district. It was Weiner who was compelled to resign his seat for posting indecent photos of himself on the Internet, forcing an early election in this traditionally Democratic district with a large Jewish population. Ed Koch, the former mayor of New York City and a life-long Democrat, called on voters to choose the Republicans this time and express their disapproval of Obama's policy on Israel. The Republican candidate, Bob Turner, won.

Add to that the criticism voiced by the leading Republican presidential candidates, Mitt Romney and Rick Perry, on the same subject. Romney said Obama's suggestion that Israeli-Palestinian negotiations should be based on the "1967 lines" was "throwing Israel under the bus." All this must have been noted in the White House, preparing for elections a little more than a year away, or else Obama did some serious reading on Jewish and Zionist history during his recent vacation in Martha's Vineyard in preparation for his speech at the UN. In his speech he did not mention settlements, nor the "1967 lines", but rather emphasized that "Israel is surrounded by neighbors that have waged repeated wars against it," and that "Israeli citizens have been killed by rockets fired at their houses and suicide bombs on their buses.... These are the facts", he concluded, "they cannot be denied."

This time, the Israeli left did not like Obama's speech. They were probably also disappointed to find that Israel was not completely

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isolated, as they claimed, with the whole world aligned against it. Who knows if mythological Micronesia supports Israel's position? But we do know that Stephen Harper, the Prime Minister of Canada—no Third World country this—firmly stands by Israel. And Donald Tusk, the Prime Minister of Poland—not only not a Third World country but presently claiming presidency of the Council of the European Union—is not prepared to back the "1967 lines" as the basis for Israeli-Palestinian negotiations....

So will all those who predicted that a tsunami would hit Israel in the month of September please stand.

ISRAEL WANTS TO TALK; THE PALESTINIANS DON'T

Jonathan S. Tobin

Contentions, October 2, 2011

[On Sunday], the Israeli government formally accepted the Diplomatic Quartet's proposal for restarting negotiations with the Palestinians. In doing so, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has once again made it crystal clear that the main, indeed, the only real obstacle to peace is the refusal of the Palestinian Authority to go back to the table. The PA has refused this offer; it says it won't talk unless Israel agrees in advance to concede everything on territory even before the negotiations begin.

This contradicts the conventional wisdom put forward by most talking heads on television and liberal pundits who continue to insist it is Netanyahu's fault peace has not broken out. But when did any of those commentators (like the New York Times' Tom Friedman who demanded last week Israel once again freeze building in the West Bank in order to entice the PA back to the table) let the facts get in the way of their pat stories about Israeli stubbornness?

Israel has clear misgivings about the idea put forward by the Quartet (which consists of the United States, the European Union, Russia and the United Nations) of separating the issues of territory and security from

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those concerning refugees and the status of Jerusalem. In the unlikely event of an agreement being reached on territory, there would now be no incentive for the Palestinians to compromise on their intransigent stands on dividing Jerusalem and upholding the so-called "right of return" for the descendants of the 1948 refugees. But Netanyahu wisely accepted the invitation to the talks, because he understands Israel must not refuse any opportunity to negotiate.

In any event, there is little danger the Palestinians will take him up on the offer. The PA has spent all of Barack Obama's term in the White House disappointing a president who is eager to pressure Israel to accommodate the Palestinian cause. But Obama's desire to pick fights with Netanyahu and to bring a Palestinian state into being has been frustrated by the simple fact PA leader Mahmoud Abbas has no intention of signing any peace deal that would force him to recognize the legitimacy of a Jewish state no matter where its borders would be drawn. Abbas has gone to the UN to demand recognition for a Palestinian state without making peace with Israel in order to evade the U.S.-sponsored peace process, not to enhance its negotiating position.

Netanyahu has moved as far as he should go toward accommodating America's desire for more talks. If the Palestinians want peace and a state, they can have it, provided they are willing to negotiate. But the only thing they seem interested in is a deal in which they get everything without being required to end the conflict....

The Palestinians no longer want land for peace. Now they are demanding land for nothing. That is not an equation that any Israeli or American who cares about the Jewish state should be willing to accept.

LAND WITHOUT PEACE: WHY ABBAS WENT TO THE U.N.

Charles Krauthammer

Washington Post, September 30, 2011

While diplomatically inconvenient for the Western powers, Palestinian

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Authority President Mahmoud Abbas's attempt to get the United Nations to unilaterally declare a Palestinian state has elicited widespread sympathy. After all, what choice did he have? According to the accepted narrative, Middle East peace is made impossible by a hard-line Likud-led Israel that refuses to accept a Palestinian state and continues to build settlements.

It is remarkable how this gross inversion of the truth has become conventional wisdom. In fact, Benjamin Netanyahu brought his Likud-led coalition to open recognition of a Palestinian state, thereby creating Israel's first national consensus for a two-state solution. He is also the only prime minister to agree to a settlement freeze—10 months—something no Labor or Kadima government has ever done.

To which Abbas responded by boycotting the talks for nine months, showing up in the 10th, then walking out when the freeze expired. Last week he reiterated that he will continue to boycott peace talks unless Israel gives up—in advance—claim to any territory beyond the 1967 lines. Meaning, for example, that the Jewish Quarter in Jerusalem is Palestinian territory. This is not just absurd. It violates every prior peace agreement. They all stipulate that such demands are to be the subject of negotiations, not their precondition.

Abbas unwaveringly insists on the so-called "right of return," which would demographically destroy Israel by swamping it with millions of Arabs, thereby turning the world's only Jewish state into the world's 23rd Arab state. And he has repeatedly declared, as recently as last week in New York: "We shall not recognize a Jewish state."

Nor is this new. It is perfectly consistent with the long history of Palestinian rejectionism. Consider:

-Camp David, 2000. At a U.S.-sponsored summit, Prime Minister Ehud Barak offers Yasser Arafat a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza—and, astonishingly, the previously inconceivable division of Jerusalem. Arafat refuses. And makes no counteroffer, thereby demonstrating his unseriousness about making any deal. Instead, within two months, he launches a savage terror war that kills a thousand Israelis.

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-Taba, 2001. An even sweeter deal—the Clinton Parameters—is offered. Arafat walks away again.

-Israel, 2008. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert makes the ultimate capitulation to Palestinian demands—100 percent of the West Bank (with land swaps), Palestinian statehood, the division of Jerusalem with the Muslim parts becoming the capital of the new Palestine. And incredibly, he offers to turn over the city's holy places, including the Western Wall—Judaism's most sacred site, its Kaaba—to an international body on which sit Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

Did Abbas accept? Of course not. If he had, the conflict would be over and Palestine would already be a member of the United Nations.

This is not ancient history. All three peace talks occurred over the past decade. And every one completely contradicts the current mindless narrative of Israeli "intransigence" as the obstacle to peace.... So why did the Palestinians say no? Because saying yes would have required them to sign a final peace agreement that accepted a Jewish state on what they consider the Muslim patrimony.

The key word here is "final." The Palestinians are quite prepared to sign interim agreements, like Oslo. Framework agreements, like Annapolis. Cease-fires, like the 1949 armistice. Anything but a final deal. Anything but a final peace. Anything but a treaty that ends the conflict once and for all—while leaving a Jewish state still standing.

After all, why did Abbas go to the United Nations? For nearly half a century, the United States has pursued a Middle East settlement on the basis of the formula of land for peace. Land for peace produced the Israel-Egypt peace of 1979 and the Israel-Jordan peace of 1994. Israel has offered the Palestinians land for peace three times since. And been refused every time.

Why? For exactly the same reason Abbas went to the United Nations: to get land without peace. Sovereignty with no reciprocal recognition of a Jewish state. Statehood without negotiations. An independent Palestine in a continued state of war with Israel.

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Israel gave up land without peace in south Lebanon in 2000 and, in return, received war (the Lebanon war of 2006) and 50,000 Hezbollah missiles now targeted on the Israeli homeland. In 2005, Israel gave up land without peace in Gaza, and again was rewarded with war—and constant rocket attack from an openly genocidal Palestinian mini-state.

Israel is prepared to give up land, but never again without peace. A final peace. Which is exactly what every Palestinian leader from Haj Amin al-Husseini to Yasser Arafat to Mahmoud Abbas has refused to accept. Which is why, regardless of who is governing Israel, there has never been peace. Territorial disputes are solvable; existential conflicts are not.

Land for peace, yes. Land without peace is nothing but an invitation to national suicide.

HOW THE PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP IS IGNORING HISTORY

Alan Dershowitz

New Republic, September 28, 2011

The Palestinians are in the process of seeking sovereignty from the United Nations, but in doing so, they are asking for more than what was offered them in any prior negotiation with Israel—including during the talks involving President Clinton and Ehud Barak in 2000 and 2001. Rather than more, it is imperative that the Palestinians get less.

It is imperative to world peace that the Palestinians pay a price—even if it's only a symbolic price—for rejecting the generous Clinton/Barak offer and responding to it with a second intifada in which 4,000 people were killed. It is also important that Israel not return to the precise armistice lines that existed prior to the 1967 war. If the Palestinians were to achieve a return to the status quo prior to Jordan's attack on Israel in June of 1967, then military aggression will not have been punished, it will have been rewarded. That's why Security Council Resolution 242—which was essentially the peace treaty that resulted from the end of the Six Day War—intended for Israel to retain territory necessary to

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give it secure boundaries (Indeed, in the formal application submitted by Abbas, he sought membership based on UN General Assembly Resolution 1810-11 of November 29, 1947, which would put the borders where they were before the Arab armies invaded the new Jewish state in 1948. This would reward multiple aggressions.)

Yet, however important it is that aggressive and unjustified violence not be rewarded, the international community seems bent on doing just that. If the end result of Jordan's 1967 attack on Israel—an attack supported by the Palestinian leadership and participated in by Palestinian soldiers—is that the Palestinians get back everything Jordan lost, there will be no disincentive to comparable military attacks around the world. If the Palestinians get more than, or even as much as, they rejected in 2000 and 2001 (and did not accept in 2007), then further intifadas with mass casualties will be encouraged. A price must be paid for violence. That's how the laws of war are supposed to work and there is no reason to make an exception in the case of the Palestinians....

I was at the United Nations on Friday when President Abbas made his speech demanding full recognition of Palestine as a state with the borders as they existed just before the Jordanians and Palestinians attacked Israel. In other words he wants a "do over." He wants the nations that attacked Israel to suffer no consequences for their attempt to destroy the Jewish State. He wants to get back The Western Wall, The Jewish Quarter, and the access road to Hebrew University. Only then will he begin negotiations from this position of strength. But why then negotiate if the UN gives him more than he can possibly get through negotiation?...

Although many in the international communities and on the editorial pages of newspapers claim that Abbas wants to negotiate a two-state solution, while Netanyahu has refused to do so, the truth was on full and open display at the General Assembly on Friday: Netanyahu wants to negotiate a peace now, whereas Abbas wants to win recognition from the United Nations before any negotiations begin. As Netanyahu put it: "Let's stop negotiating about negotiating and let's just start negotiating right now...."

If...the UN were to reward nearly a century of Palestinian rejectionism

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and violence by simply turning the clock back to 1967 (or 1947), it will be encouraging more cost-free rejectionism and violence. The Palestinians must pay a price for the thousands of lives their rejectionism and violence have caused. The price must not be so heavy as to preclude peace, but it must be heavy enough to deter war.