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Palestinian Leader Abbas Sharply Criticizes Trump and Peace Plan

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As we wrote yesterday, President Trump, standing beside Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, formally announced details from a peace plan designed to settle differences between Israelis and Palestinians.

“It will be a suggestion between Israel and the Palestinians. It’s the closest it’s ever come,” Trump told reporters. “We have support of the prime minister. We have the support of the other [Israeli political] parties, and we think we will ultimately have support of Palestinians.”

Few were surprised when Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas — who recently refused to accept a call from Trump, and called him “a dog, son of a b*tch, a violent man who wants to force us into a program we’re not interested in” — rejected the Trump plan outright.

“After the nonsense that we heard today we say a thousand no’s to the Deal of The Century,” he said.

“We will not kneel and we will not surrender,” Abbas said, adding that the Palestinians would resist the plan through “peaceful, popular means.”

Trump’s plan would create a Palestinian state in parts of the West Bank, but would allow Israel to annex its settlements in the occupied territory. The plan would allow the Palestinians to establish a capital on the outskirts of east Jerusalem but would leave most of the city under Israeli control.

The Islamic militant group Hamas — which Israel, the United States, and the European Union have classified as a terrorist organization — rejected the “conspiracies” announced by the United States and Israel and said “all options are open” in responding to the Trump administration’s plan.

“We are certain that our Palestinian people will not let these conspiracies pass. So, all options are open. The [Israeli] occupation and the U.S. administration will bear the responsibility for what they did,” senior Hamas official Khalil al-Hayya said.

Since the 2006 Palestinian parliamentary elections, Hamas (which controls Gaza) has been estranged from the Fatah Party, which controls the Palestinian National Authority in the West Bank. Although the plan does not impact Gaza, Hamas evidently is vigorously objecting to it nevertheless.

Though Abbas may be more reluctant than members of Hamas to openly embrace terrorist tactics, he was a KGB agent in the 1980s, making him an integral part of efforts by the old Soviet Union to extend communism to the region.

Abbas and Hamas are still on speaking terms, which says much about the dynamics in the Palestinian world. AP reported that Abbas held an emergency meeting with other Palestinian factions, including Hamas, to discuss a unified response to the Trump plan. Abbas had rejected the deal before it was announced, saying the United States was hopelessly biased toward Israel.



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2011 photo of Mahmoud Abbas: AP Images

Warren Mass has served The New American since its launch in 1985 in several capacities, including marketing, editing, and writing. Since retiring from the staff several years ago, he has been a regular contributor to the magazine. Warren writes from Texas and can be reached at wmass@thenewamerican.com.

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