



## **Palestinians Want a State but Don't Want Peace**

If the Palestinians really wanted peace, they would have to stop shooting rockets from Gaza into Israeli towns. The rocket attacks have been going on for years. But the Palestinians have decided to acquire statehood, not by an agreement with Israel that would require them to end their war against the Jewish state, but by a vote of recognition in the United Nations General Assembly. They have been told that the United States would veto such a bid in the Security Council. But a positive vote in the General Assembly would upgrade the Palestinians' observer status in the UN and permit them to participate in that body's activities virtually as if they were a member state.



If the Palestinians really want peace they would have to stop killing Jews in Samaria and Judea, otherwise known as the West Bank. They would have to agree that Jews could live in their ancient homeland under a democratic Palestinian authority just as over a million Palestinians live in Israel and enjoy Israeli citizenship.

But the Israelis have no reason to believe that the Palestinians will stop waging war against them. And that is why Israel is investing huge sums of money in developing their missile defense shield, Iron Dome, to fend off the unceasing rocket attacks from Gaza and potentially from Lebanon, Syria, and Iran as well. And with the future of Egypt on hold, no one knows what the Middle East will look like after the Arab Spring has turned into the Arab winter.

Which is why Israel cannot end its control over the West Bank. They know what happened after they left Gaza, uprooting Jewish towns and industries in order to give the Palestinians complete, unequivocal control over the territory. The result has been disastrous. Hamas, the extremist Islamic party, which was democratically elected by the Palestinians on a platform advocating the destruction of Israel, wrenched control of Gaza from the less openly belligerent Fatah Palestinian faction and began waging a hot war against the Jewish state by sending rockets into Israeli towns.

This then led to Cast Iron, an invasion of Gaza by Israel to stop the rocket attacks. Naturally some civilians were killed and Israel was condemned by the International Community as being too harsh on the Palestinians. Nobody condemned the Gazans for their constant shelling of Israeli towns and becoming a proxy for the Iranians who also want to destroy Israel.

Fortunately, Egyptian leader Mubarak was just as concerned with potential anti-Egyptian Iranian-sponsored terrorism from Gaza as was Israel. But now that Mubarak is gone, there seems to be more sympathy for the Palestinian political movements among Egyptians than when Mubarak was in power.

After four days of rocket attacks from Gaza in late August, during which the Israelis were able to shoot down 20 of the rockets with their Iron Dome missile shield, a cease-fire between Israel and Hamas was



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arranged by the UN and Egypt to end a situation that was bringing both sides to the brink of a major military conflict for the second time in five months. According to the [Christian Science Monitor](#) (8/22/11):

A key factor supporting the cease-fire was a new weapons system that allows Israel to protect its citizens and thereby lessen public pressure for swift retaliatory strikes on Gaza.

Though not fool-proof, the "Iron Dome" missile-defense system shot down about 20 militant rockets in recent days before they landed in Israel cities. That provided a window for mediators from Egypt and the United Nations to step in and calm the situation.

Israeli officials had high praise for the system, which was rushed into development following Israel's 2006 war in Lebanon with Hezbollah, when short-range rockets paralyzed Israel despite its aggressive attack capabilities.

"First of all it provides the people better security," said Yosef Kuperwasser, director general of Israel's Strategic Affairs Ministry. "It provides us with a wider room to maneuver if our citizens are protected.

"If needed we can have a longer period of escalation and we can sustain it for a longer period of time before doing what is necessary," he added, referring to a major escalation.

So far, the Israeli army has achieved a 93 percent success rate with Iron Dome. But it is just one element in a system of very costly anti-missile hardware developed to answer developing threats not only from enemies only a few miles away in Lebanon and Gaza, but from enemies as far away as Iran.

Congress is not too happy with how the Obama administration has locked itself in a corner so that it has no choice but to veto the Palestinian bid for immediate statehood. According to Fox News, 9/16/11:

On Wednesday, Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, (R-Fla.) chairwoman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said if the U.S. wants to stop the Palestinian statehood bid in its tracks, it should dangle the threat of no more aid.

"Despite decades of assistance totaling billions of dollars, if a Palestinian state were declared today, it would be neither democratic, nor peaceful, nor willing to negotiate with Israel. By providing the Palestinians with \$2.5 billion over the last five years, the U.S. has only rewarded and reinforced their bad behavior," she said.

Rep. Howard Berman (D-Calif.) the ranking member on the same committee, suggested that even if the U.S. vetoes a Palestinian bid at the Security Council, approval by the General Assembly of limited recognition, which would require a two-thirds vote, would be cataclysmic to the Israelis:

If the General Assembly enhances the Palestinians' current status as a non-state observer to that of a state, the Palestinians would have standing to bring cases against Israel at the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice, and that is exactly what President Abbas has indicated he will do," Berman said. "Of course, that would merely waste more time and further poison relations with Israel, making statehood and peace further away than ever.

You can also be sure that no-one at the corrupt, heavily Muslim UN will insist that the Palestinians stop shooting rockets at Israeli towns before they are given statehood. There seems to be a general consensus at the UN that the Palestinians can keep on waging war on Israel, collect free money from the U.S. and E.U., and use the UN for their continued diplomatic war against the Jewish state. Nor will the UN urge the Palestinians to allow Jews to live in the Palestinian state, just as Israel allows over a



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million Palestinians to live in the Jewish state. As Abbas has said, not a single Jew will be permitted to live in the Palestinian state. So much for religious tolerance.

We shall have to wait and see what happens at the UN to know if anything important will have changed in the Middle East other than simply another diplomatic setback for Israel. It will be interesting to see who votes for what. Israel has few friends at the UN, but perhaps they have just enough of them to prevent the worst.



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