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## **Abbas rejected U.S. call to meet with Netanyahu**

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas reportedly turned down an American request that he meet with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in a bid to jumpstart peace talks. U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry made the request of the Palestinian leader at their July meeting in Paris, the Palestinian newspaper Al-Quds reported on Thursday. Abbas refused the meeting, the newspaper said, telling Kerry that he would only acquiesce after Netanyahu froze all settlement construction, including in Jerusalem, and released the last group of prisoners detained prior to the Oslo Accords. According to The Times of Israel, in May, Netanyahu said he was willing “to meet President Abbas today in Jerusalem. If he’d like, in Ramallah. Right now. Today.”

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