

AIPAC WELCOMES RENEWAL OF PEACE TALKS Must lead to direct talks without precondition or delay

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Contact: Josh Block
press@aipac.org

AIPAC welcomes the renewal of peace talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, provided that these proximity talks lead rapidly and without precondition to direct, bilateral negotiations between the parties, and we share the administration's goal for these talks to serve as a means to that end.

Only sitting together, talking face-to-face, leader-to-leader will lead to peace, reconciliation and the end of all claims. Direct, bilateral negotiations are the path to peace.

Previously unheard-of Palestinian preconditions remain the primary obstacle to progress, and for nearly a year have served as the excuse proffered by PA President Abbas and his team to avoid talking to our ally, Israel.

If the PA is sincere about peace, they will drop the pretense and the preconditions and engage in direct negotiations without delay.

In contrast to Palestinian backsliding, Israel's Prime Minister has reaffirmed the Jewish State's commitment to peace, calling to immediately engage in direct negotiations on all aspects of the peace process, including final status issues. Israel has taken unprecedented steps, once again demonstrating readiness to sacrifice for peace, echoing the tough decisions that led to peace with Egypt and Jordan.

For over six decades, Israel has consistently offered its hand in peace, demonstrating again and again its willingness to make real and heartrending sacrifices – altering borders, relinquishing territory, uprooting families and entire communities – in the pursuit of peace.

Now it is time – well past time – for the Palestinians and the Arab States to grasp Israel's outstretched hand, and sit down, face-to-face, in pursuit of peace.

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