

Division for Palestinian Rights

*Chronological Review of Events Relating to the
Question of Palestine***Monthly media monitoring review
September 2011***Monthly highlights*

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1

European Union (EU) High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton said that the question of whether to recognize the Palestinian bid at the United Nations remained "hypothetical" because no resolution had been tabled yet. She said that European Union members were united "over the most critical issue", which was "to try to get the talks moving", and reiterated the EU's position that Israeli settlement building was illegal under international law. Diplomats said that Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Malta, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Sweden may back the resolution. (*AP, Haaretz*)

The President of the Turkish Parliament's Political Committee, Zaki Douser, affirmed, during a visit to Cairo, Turkey's support for the Palestinian bid to seek United Nations recognition. (*Wafa*)

Israel's Supreme Court turned down for the second time a request for a retrial over the fate of the "Beit Yonatan" building, owned by settlers in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Silwan. In 2007, a local court ordered the settlers evicted but the order had never been implemented. (*AFP*)

Filippo Grandi, Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) expressed concern about renewed unrest in the Middle East linked to the Palestinian Authority's (PA) upcoming bid for UN recognition. "This is a very sensitive moment. It is a sensitive political process, and it may generate many emotions on the ground. ... I think it is important that, on all sides, political leaderships behave responsibly and ensure that whatever emotions are expressed throughout the next few weeks do not degenerate," he said, after meeting with EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton in Brussels, during which they signed an agreement to increase UNRWA funding by the EU to €80 million (\$115 million) a year for the next three years. (*Deutsche Presse Agentur (DPA)*)

2

The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) arrested two Palestinians during overnight raids. (*Haaretz*)

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton said that EU Foreign Ministers were grappling at a meeting in Poland on whether to take a unified position on the Palestinian United Nations bid. She did not say how the discussions were leaning, but diplomats said that Ms. Ashton would attempt to forge a consensus around the so-called "Vatican option", which would see Palestine recognized as an observer State. (*AP, DPA*)

The report of the Panel of Inquiry on the flotilla incident of 31 May 2010 [Palmer report] had found that Israel's naval blockade of Gaza was both legal and appropriate. The report also found that when Israeli commandos boarded the main ship, they faced "organized and violent resistance from a group of passengers" and were therefore required to use force for their own protection. But the report called the force "excessive and unreasonable", stating that the loss of life was

unacceptable and that the Israeli military's later treatment of passengers was abusive. The report recommended that Israel make "an appropriate statement of regret" and pay compensation. It added, however, that the flotilla had "acted recklessly in attempting to breach the naval blockade". (*The New York Times*) Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu said: "Turkey does not recognize Israel's blockade of Gaza. It will secure the study of this blockade at the International Court of Justice. We are beginning initiatives to get the UN General Assembly moving [on this]," he added. "Turkey-Israel diplomatic relations have been reduced to a second secretary level," he said during a news conference in Ankara. "All military agreements have been suspended," Mr. Davutoğlu said, adding that the Palmer report was the authors' "personal opinion, one which does not correspond with Turkey's position." He also said that support would be given to Turkish and foreign victims to seek justice from courts. (*Reuters*) "We will announce our acceptance of the [Palmer] report after its official publication, with specific reservations," an Israeli official, who declined to be identified, told AFP. (*AFP*) Hamas criticized "Israel's refusal to lift the siege on Gaza" and called the Palmer report "unfair and unbalanced". (*AFP*)

3

The Israeli army said in a statement that its aircraft had targeted a weapons manufacturing site in the central Gaza Strip and a hit was confirmed. The bombing caused a fire which was extinguished and no injuries were reported. *Israeli Radio* said that projectiles had been fired from Gaza at southern Israel. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

According to Awad Abu Sway, the Spokesman for the PA Ministry of Agriculture office in Bethlehem, Israeli bulldozers, guarded by military vehicles, razed Palestinian fields in al-Walaja village, north-west of Bethlehem, for the second day in a row, and detained two Palestinians who were protesting against the wall. (*The Palestine Telegraph*)

The Centre for Defence of Freedoms and Civil Rights said in a statement that Israeli soldiers had entered the home of Ramzi Rabah, a senior member of the Democratic Front for the Liberation (DFLP) of Palestine, near Ramallah, and arrested his son, Murad, a member of the DFLP political bureau. Hamas legislator Ahmad Atun said that senior Hamas figure Muhammad Abu Tir had been arrested overnight by IDF forces in Kafr Aqab, north of Jerusalem. Israeli forces detained 20 Palestinians across the West Bank overnight to be questioned by security forces, an Israeli military spokesman said. (*Ma'an News Agency, Wafa, Ynetnews*)

According to a *New York Times* article, senior United States Administration officials said that the US had circulated a proposal for renewed peace talks between Israelis and the Palestinians hoping to persuade PA President Mahmoud Abbas to abandon the plan to seek recognition as a State at the United Nations. Diplomats had been trying to formulate language that would bridge differences over settlements and the recognition of Israel as a Jewish State. The Israelis had responded positively to the draft but the Palestinian position remained unclear. (*The New York Times*)

Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski said, at the conclusion of the EU Foreign Ministers' meeting in Sopot, Poland: "We cannot have a common position on a resolution whose content we do not yet know." "So far, the positions in the EU are very divergent," Austrian Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger told reporters, adding, "I hope that we, as Europe, can send a signal ... and phrase a text which eventually might be brought before the [General] Assembly." (*Reuters, www.europolitics.info*)

Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Executive Committee member Saeb Erakat condemned the report of the Panel of Inquiry on the flotilla incident of 31 May 2010. "This report is terrible and negative. It's a purely political report, it's not legal," Mr. Erakat said, adding, "Israel's actions against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip have reached the level of war crimes." "The [Organization of Islamic Cooperation] OIC cannot accept any report that would whitewash Israel's attack on the humanitarian flotilla and condone Israel's illegal blockade against the Palestinian civilians in the besieged Gaza Strip," OIC Secretary-General Ihsanoglu said. Arab League Secretary-General Nabil Al-Arabi stated: "As far as I reviewed it, many facts have been ignored in the UN report." (*AFP, Today's Zaman*)

4

PA President Abbas said that recognizing a Palestinian State was aimed at moving the status of the Occupied Palestinian Territory to a "State under occupation". (*Xinhua*)

To prevent incidents during Palestinian marches in support of a statehood drive during the month, the Israeli army had been training soldiers in non-lethal riot control tactics and inviting settlers to watch the drills at a military camp in central Israel. Retired General Ilan Paz said that the army was preparing for worst-case scenarios, even authorizing settlers to shoot at Palestinians who approach their communities. (*AFP*)

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told his Cabinet that Israel would not apologize to Turkey for the Gaza flotilla incident. (*AFP*)

5

PA President Abbas told a group of 20 Israeli intellectuals that by seeking United Nations recognition, "We don't want to delegitimize Israel. We want to legitimize ourselves." He said that Palestinians would return to negotiations after the UN recognition of a State. According to the group's spokeswoman, Hila Aloni, and Ahmed Tibi, the Israeli-Arab member of the Knesset who accompanied the group, Mr. Abbas said that he had held two meetings with Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak, the most recent in Amman in August. (*AFP, Haaretz*)

PLO Executive Committee and Palestinian Legislative Council member Hanan Ashrawi urged Belgium to support the Palestinian bid for statehood during a meeting with Prime Minister Yves Leterme in Jerusalem. For his part, Prime Minister Leterme stressed the importance of developing a unified EU position and reiterated his strong support for the ongoing efforts of EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton towards achieving a consensus position among EU members. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Negotiations were the only way of ensuring the creation of a full-fledged Palestinian State "that will live in peace and security with Israel and other countries in the region", Russian Federation Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said. (*RIAN*)

During a joint news conference with senior Fatah official Nabil Sha'ath, Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoğlu said that they were jointly planning a campaign for the recognition of Palestinian statehood by the General Assembly. (*Today's Zaman*)

PLO and Palestinian Legislative Council member Hanan Ashrawi told *Reuters*: "...We are keeping all our options and alternatives open. We are still discussing with all our friends ... the best, most effective means of addressing the UN and getting membership... Hopefully we will take the decision soon but we will take it when we are in New York because we do not want to pre-empt any moves by having people trying to subvert our efforts." (*Reuters*)

After meeting in Jerusalem with visiting Belgian Prime Minister Yves Leterme, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu repeated a call for PA President Abbas to resume negotiations, saying, "He can come to Jerusalem, I could go to Ramallah or we could both go to Brussels." In a statement, Mr. Netanyahu said that "to his regret, the Palestinian leadership had chosen to refrain from direct dialogue, preferring instead to appeal to the UN, a move which will lead to deadlock." (*AFP*)

At a press conference with PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad following their meeting in Ramallah, Belgium's Prime Minister Leterme said that his Government was considering upgrading the diplomatic status of the Palestinian delegation in Brussels. For his part, Mr. Fayyad said that the Palestinian bid at the UN was a natural progression of what started in 1988 when the declaration of Palestinian statehood was made. (*Wafa*)

At the International Conference on Economic Regional Cooperation, in Tel Aviv, US Ambassador to Israel Daniel Shapiro urged Israel and the Palestinians to return to the negotiating table before the instability in the Middle East spiralled further out of control. (*Haaretz*)

In a statement, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton condemned the setting on fire and vandalizing of the Al-Nurayn Mosque in Qusra, in the West Bank. According to Palestinian sources, the mosque was set on fire by settlers, hours after Israeli police officers had destroyed three illegal structures in the settlement outpost of "Migron". (*Haaretz, www.consilium.europa.eu*)

6

Israeli forces killed a Palestinian gunman and wounded two civilians during an incursion into the southern Gaza Strip. The Popular Resistance Committees said that its men battled Israeli troops who had crossed the border near Khan Yunis and that one militant had died in an air strike. An Israeli military spokesman described "a routine operational activity following an operational assessment" but did not give further details. (*Reuters*)

At a press briefing, Brigadier-General Michael Edelstein, officer-in-charge of Israel's counter-demonstration doctrines, told reporters that Israeli soldiers would show "much more tolerance" towards Palestinian demonstrations [expected in September] than in the past, thanks to riot-control training and new equipment designed to reduce injuries and deaths. (*Reuters*)

Senior Fatah official Sha'ath said that he expected 140 countries to recognize and vote for a Palestinian State at the General Assembly's sixty-sixth session. At present, 125 countries recognize Palestine, he added. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Members of the British Parliament debated the possible UN membership of a Palestinian State. The debate was secured by Richard Burden, MP, and Chair of the Britain-Palestine All Party Parliamentary Group. Over 40 MPs put their names to a parliamentary motion supporting Palestinian membership at the UN, tabled by the Chair of the Parliamentary Human Rights Group, Rt. Hon. Ann Clwyd. (Wafa)

In his concluding remarks during the meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM) in Belgrade, the Chair, Egyptian Foreign Minister Mohamed Kamel Ali Amr, said that its members would "continue to support the Palestinian endeavours during the sixty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly for the recognition of the State of Palestine, based on the borders of the fourth of June 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and to seek its admission as a full member in the United Nations." He later told a news conference: "There will be no official resolution coming from this meeting, but there's a feeling that the majority of non-aligned countries will support the UN resolution." Malaysian Foreign Minister Dato Sri Anifah Aman said that he had urged NAM members who had not recognized the independent State of Palestine to do so to restore peace. (Reuters, Xinhua)

US State Department Spokesperson Victoria Nuland said that the Acting US Special Envoy for the Middle East, David Hale, and the Special Assistant to the President, Dennis Ross, were in the Middle East "to consult with both the Israelis and the Palestinians on how best to overcome the impasse and to resume negotiations based on the President's May outline." She said, "Secretary [of State Hillary] Clinton also spoke by phone with President Abbas [yesterday] to preview the visit, to urge President Abbas to receive them and hear them with open ears, and to continue to work hard with us to avoid a negative scenario in New York at the end of the month." (AFP, www.state.gov)

In a new report, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs stated that it had documented and mapped a total of 522 obstacles (roadblocks, checkpoints, etc.) that were obstructing Palestinian movement within the West Bank, a 4 per cent increase over the July 2010 figure of 503. It added that almost no changes had been observed in the other components of the system of movement restrictions, including the wall, the permit and "prior coordination" regimes to access the "seam zone" or settlement areas, and the closure of areas for military training. (www.ochaopt.org)

The Head of the IDF West Bank Military Administration said that the military was temporarily suspending its policy of demolishing illegally built Palestinian homes in the West Bank after determining that the policy was not equally enforced against illegally built settler homes. (AP)

Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan said that Turkey was freezing defence industry trade with Israel and stepping up Turkish naval patrols in the eastern Mediterranean. (Reuters)

7

A member of the military wing Islamic Jihad was killed in an explosion west of Deir Al-Balah, in the Gaza Strip, in an Israeli air strike, according to the group. Two other members of the group were wounded. The Israeli army denied involvement. (Ma'an News Agency, Reuters)

Qassam rockets were fired from Gaza into the western Negev. No injuries or damage were reported. (www.israelnationalnews.com)

According to Israeli news reports, Israel's security service had foiled a suicide attack the previous month in Jerusalem and had seized an explosive belt. A spokesman for Hamas' Al-Qassam Brigades, however, dismissed the report as false. (IMEMC)

PA President Abbas met in Ramallah with the Acting US Special Envoy for the Middle East, David Hale, the Special Assistant to the President, Dennis Ross, and the US Consul General in Jerusalem, Daniel Rubinstein. Mr. Abbas stressed that the Palestinian bid to seek full membership at the UN did not contradict with the peace process. Mr. Abbas also stressed the Palestinian leadership's willingness to return to negotiations if Israel accepted terms of reference for the peace process and the two-State solution within the 1967 borders and stopped settlement activity. (Wafa)

China's Foreign Minister, Yang Jiechi, said in a press release that China supported the Palestinians' bid at the United Nations and their struggle to restore their legitimate rights. "China believes that establishing an independent Palestinian State within [the] 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as its capital, is an inalienable matter and a main condition for Palestinian-Israeli coexistence," Mr. Yang said. (Wafa)

The Arab League announced that the 136th meeting of Arab Foreign Ministers would be held on 13 and 14 September to support the Palestinian motion to head to the UN for the [recognition] of a Palestinian State within the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. (KUNA)

The Egyptian Foreign Ministry reported that Foreign Minister Mohamed Kamel Ali Amr discussed in Belgrade with the Spanish [Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs] Juan Antonio Yáñez-Barnuevo their support for the Palestinian bid. Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo stressed his country's willingness to urge more European countries to support it as well. The two officials agreed to coordinate efforts regarding the matter. (Wafa)

Popular Resistance Campaign coordinator Mahmud Az-Ziq said that Hamas was refusing to allow any mass demonstrations in Gaza in support of the UN bid. (Ma'an News Agency)

Peace Now reported that the construction rate in settlements was nearly double the construction rate in Israel. During the 10 months since the end of the building freeze in the settlements from October 2010 to July 2011, construction of 2,598 new housing units had begun, 2,149 new housing units had been completed, and at least 3,700 units were under construction, erasing any effects of the freeze. (Ynetnews, www.peacenow.org.il)

A large group of Israeli settlers entered Joseph's Tomb in Nablus at dawn where they performed prayers under the Israeli army's protection, according to local sources. (Wafa)

Israeli forces detained four people in the northern West Bank. They also detained a member of the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front after holding him at the Atara checkpoint, north of Ramallah. (Ma'an News Agency)

8

Israeli forces detained three Palestinians from Qalqilya, local witnesses and the Israeli military said, in the third such raid in 48 hours. An Israeli military spokeswoman said that six Palestinians had also been arrested in the Ramallah area. (Ma'an News Agency)

PA President Abbas said that he expected the UN request to be formally lodged with the Secretary-General on 21 or 22 September, adding: "We have an application in hand. Everything is ready." He acknowledged that Quartet Representative Tony Blair was working on a joint statement to restart negotiations, but he told foreign reporters that the Quartet was too late after wasting the previous year. "When they come here to tell us, OK, we have this idea or this package and don't go to the UN, we will not accept it," he said. Mr. Abbas repeated several times during his hour-long briefing that he was not seeking a "confrontation" with the US or President Barack Obama. (The Independent)

Palestinians launched activities of the "Palestine 194" campaign in support of the United Nations bid. A march joined by about 100 people led to the UN office in Ramallah, where organizers presented a letter requesting that the Secretary-General support the membership bid. There were plans to hold marches and non-violent protests up to the time the UN would vote on the Palestinian request. The largest demonstrations were expected to take place on 21 September, the day the General Assembly starts its sixty-sixth session, and on 23 September, the day PA President Abbas was expected to make his address to the General Assembly. The PLO had denied that it had submitted an official request to the UN, explaining that the campaign was solely the work of grass-roots activists. (AFP, Ma'an News Agency, Haaretz)

PA President Abbas met with senior Palestinian representatives, including the Central Committee of his Fatah party, the PLO Executive Committee and leaders of various Palestinian political parties to discuss details of the Palestinian bid for the UN membership. (Ma'an News Agency)

South Africa's Representative to the PA, Mlungisi Makalima, stressed his country's support of the bid to gain full UN recognition of a Palestinian State within the 1967 borders, as well as the intention to work towards gaining the support of all the African Union members for the bid. (Wafa)

The United States would veto a UN resolution creating a Palestinian State if such a measure reached the Security Council, Wendy Sherman, nominee for a top State Department post told lawmakers during her confirmation hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. (AFP)

Israeli settlers set alight two cars in the village of Qabalan, south of Nablus. They also vandalized a mosque in Yatma village south of Nablus, sprayed anti-Muslim and anti-Arab slogans on the walls, and uprooted over 35 olive trees in the village of Hawara, near the settlement of "Yizhar." (Ma'an News Agency, The Jerusalem Post)

Settlers from "Elkana" settlement, west of the village of Masha in the northern West Bank, razed Palestinian land. (Wafa)

An Israeli army unit of four Israeli bulldozers and five tanks entered the Gaza Strip and razed Palestinian land to the east of Rafah under heavy military air cover and

sporadic shooting, according to local sources. (Wafa)

Israeli forces demolished three water wells in the village of Naseriya, east of Nablus, that were used to irrigate around 1,500 dunums of agricultural land. According to the villagers, this was the second time since July that Israeli forces had demolished the wells. (Wafa)

Israel remained ready to free 1,000 Palestinian prisoners for Gilad Shalit, according to the captive soldier's father. At a press conference at UN Headquarters, Noam Shalit said that any UN vote on Palestinian membership should be tied to his son's release. He indicated that many Palestinian detainees were only being held by Israel because of the dispute with Hamas over his son. (www.un.org)

Turkish warships would escort the country's aid vessels bound for the Gaza Strip to protect them from Israeli ships, Prime Minister Erdoğan said. (AFP, Aljazeera)

Palestinian snipers opened fire from the Gaza Strip towards Netiv Ha'asarah in southern Israel. There were no casualties, but some damage was caused to buildings in the community. (The Jerusalem Post)

Quartet Representative Blair called for a new campaign to get Israeli-Palestinian peace talks back on track. "I totally understand the frustrations the Palestinians have. We are all frustrated in this situation. We want to see progress towards peace, towards the two-State solution," Mr. Blair told Reuters. "The problem is... what happens the day after [the UN bid]? Any gestures that are done by way of unilateral declaration, they are expressions of frustration and they may be understandable for that reason but they don't deliver a Palestinian State," he said. (Haaretz)

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told reporters: "I support also the statehood of Palestinians, an independent sovereign State of Palestine. It has been long overdue," but it was up to the Member States to decide on membership: "So I leave it to the Member States to decide whether to recognize or not recognize." (Reuters)

EU sources said that Malta was supporting the UN bid of the Palestinians, together with Belgium, Cyprus, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. However, when asked about Malta's stand, a Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesman said, "The matter is still being discussed at the EU level." (www.timesofmalta.com)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belize announced the Government's decision to formally recognize Palestine as a sovereign and independent State within the 1967 borders. (www.amandala.com)

Tunisia confirmed that it would support the Palestinian bid at the UN. (Ma'an News Agency)

The Foreign Minister of New Zealand, Murray McCully, met with his Palestinian counterpart, Riad Malki, as the latter sought support for Palestine's bid for membership at the UN. Mr. Malki, on his first visit to New Zealand, also expressed the wish to set up a diplomatic post in Wellington – something Mr. McCully said would be "very welcome" if Palestine was in a position to do so. (www.nzherald.co.nz)

10

Israeli forces fired an artillery shell at a civilian car east of Khan Yunis, in the southern Gaza Strip, causing no injuries, according to medics. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli forces detained four Palestinians overnight in the Hebron district. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli settlers from "Suseya", in the south Hebron Hills, set fire to a tent in the nearby Palestinian village. (Wafa)

11

Israeli soldiers detained a 14-year-old Palestinian at the Beit Jala checkpoint near Bethlehem. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli forces released three Palestinian boys from Gaza who, according to witnesses, were detained after at least eight army jeeps had entered Gaza near Al-Qarara village amid fire from military towers. An Israeli military spokesperson said that soldiers had apprehended three Palestinians trying to cross into Israel. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli forces detained eight fishermen off the coast of Gaza City. An Israeli military spokesperson said that they had deviated from the fishing area and failed to respond to Israeli naval orders to turn around. (Ma'an News Agency)

In an interview with Jordan's Al-Rai newspaper, PA President Abbas said: "We will go to the United Nations to obtain an international recognition of the State of Palestine, despite the obstacles and dangers, including US threats to halt \$470 million in annual assistance. ... If Washington uses a veto against us, this does not mean a boycott. We had our differences with the US in the past. Anyway, we will take a suitable decision in line with developments." (AFP)

In an interview with Voice of Palestine radio, PLO Central Committee member Sha'ath said, "The European Union Foreign Ministers have entrusted the EU foreign policy chief, Catherine Ashton, to represent the EU's vision to President Mahmoud Abbas on the Palestinian bid at the UN." (Wafa)

The Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas, consisting of Antigua and Barbuda, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Cuba, Dominica, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, stressed in a press release its support for the Palestinian bid to gain full UN membership within the 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital. (Wafa)

Prince Turki al-Faisal, former chief of Saudi Arabia's intelligence services and former Ambassador to the US, wrote in an opinion piece in The New York Times that "the US must support the Palestinian bid for statehood at the UN this month or risk losing the little credibility it has in the Arab world.... With most of the Arab world in upheaval, the "special relationship" between Saudi Arabia and the US would increasingly be seen as toxic by the vast majority of Arabs and Muslims, who demand justice for the Palestinian people." (The New York Times)

The Israeli Cabinet approved a plan to relocate more than 30,000 of the Negev Desert's Palestinian Bedouin from their land. The move was described by the Bedouin's representatives as "a declaration of war on the Bedouin in the Negev". According to the plan, the Bedouin will be compensated with alternative land in the Bedouin communities of Rahat, Kseifa and Hura, three communities already suffering from difficult living conditions and limited infrastructure. (Middle East Monitor)

12

US President Obama said that a Palestinian bid for recognition at the UN was a "distraction" and would not result in viable statehood. He also said that Israel would "hurt itself" if it retaliated to any such action by withdrawing resources that in any way harmed Palestinian self-policing efforts. (AFP)

Arab Foreign Ministers agreed, in a meeting attended by PA President Abbas, to marshal support for a Palestinian bid for UN membership. Arab League Secretary-General Al-Arabi said after the meeting that "consultations and communications will continue in order to reach the goal" of Palestinian UN membership. (AFP)

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton, speaking after her address at the opening in Cairo of the meeting of the Arab League Peace Initiative Committee, said that the EU remained strongly committed to achieving the two-State solution, with the State of Israel and the State of Palestine living side by side in peace and security. The only way to do that was through negotiations. (www.consilium.europa.eu)

The Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Vitaly Churkin, told Rossiya-24 news channel in an interview that the Russian Government would back any approach that Palestine adopted in its effort to seek membership in the UN. Mr. Churkin said that Moscow had supported Palestine's bid for statehood since 1988. (The Washington Post)

PA Foreign Minister Malki said that his German counterpart, Guido Westerwelle, told President Abbas during a meeting the previous day in Amman, that Germany would not support the Palestinian bid at the UN. (DPA)

After meeting with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr in Cairo, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton said in a statement: "There is no resolution on the table yet, so there is no [European] position. What we're very clear about from the European Union is that the way forward is negotiations." (Haaretz, www.consilium.europa.eu)

The World Bank released a report ahead of the meeting of Ad Hoc Liaison Committee on Assistance to the Palestinian People (AHLCC), to be held in New York on 18 September, in which it said that there had been substantial progress in implementing the PA's two-year institution-building programme but an acute fiscal crisis, accompanied by declining economic growth, might undermine the achievements. It added that remaining Israeli restrictions must be lifted ultimately in order for the PA to sustain the reform momentum and its achievements in institution-building. (www.worldbank.org)

Armed settlers raided a Palestinian house, beat a resident and burned his cars in Burqa village, east of Ramallah. (Wafa)

Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan said that Israel's raid on a Gaza-bound aid flotilla the previous year had been "cause for war" but added that his country had showed "patience" and refrained from taking any action. Mr. Erdoğan made the comments before departing for a visit to Egypt, where he would seek to boost his Government's already high standing in the Arab world — a position he had achieved in part by challenging Israel on the world stage. (Arab news)

13

Fatah Central Committee member Mohammad Shtayyeh said that the Quartet had informed the Palestinian side of its intention to submit a proposal that would allow the resumption of negotiations with Israel and avert conflict over the Palestinian bid for UN membership. Mr. Shtayyeh said that the Palestinian leadership would welcome such a statement if it called on Israel to stop settlements and adopted clear terms of reference for the negotiations, and as long as Israel accepted its terms. The statement would not stop the Palestinians from going to the UN but would allow the resumption of negotiations after returning from the world body, he said.

(Wafa)

Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan told Arab Foreign Ministers meeting in Cairo that recognition of a Palestinian State was an obligation, as the Palestinians prepared to submit a bid for UN membership. (AFP)

Deliberations of the 136th session of the Arab League's ministerial meeting at the level of Foreign Ministers began in Cairo. The Palestinian cause and the Arab-Israeli conflict, as well as the Arab diplomatic action at the UN for international recognition of the State of Palestine, would be discussed. (KUNA)

Even if the UN granted membership to the Palestinians, Israeli settlers in the West Bank said that they were ready to stop a Palestinian State from becoming a reality on the ground. The head of the Regional Council for Gush Etzion said that settlers "must assert the right on this land and stop thinking about the establishment of a Palestinian State, so that we can concentrate on ways to live as good neighbours with the Palestinians." (AFP)

Israeli bulldozers demolished a house under construction in Beit Ummer, a town north of Hebron. Mohammed Awad, media spokesman of the popular committee against the wall and settlements, said that Israeli forces, accompanied by military bulldozers and the so-called civil administration, had demolished the house which was owned by a Palestinian family. Israeli soldiers also handed a demolition order to another Palestinian citizen in the east of Beit Ummer town under the pretext of illegal construction. (The Palestine Telegraph)

UNRWA renewed its appeal for urgently needed emergency assistance in the impoverished Gaza Strip. The \$36 million appeal came amid protests against reductions in emergency activities that had already been caused by severe funding shortfalls and against the backdrop of events elsewhere in the Arab world. Of the \$36 million, \$11 million would be required for creating temporary employment, \$16 million for food assistance, \$6 million for school feeding, and \$3 million for community mental health. (www.unrwa.org)

Germany, for the first time, contributed to the school feeding programme of UNRWA. The contribution of \$2.8 million was announced at a ceremony in Gaza. (www.unrwa.org)

According to PA officials, Israeli settlers from "Yizhar" settlement, in the northern West Bank, attacked two Palestinians from the Balata refugee camp in Nablus.

The two men sustained serious injuries. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli military authorities informed a number of Palestinians of their plans to demolish their houses and a local school in the Arroub refugee camp, north of Hebron.

(Wafa)

Israeli soldiers demolished a Palestinian well in Khirbet Atuf, near Tubas, and two Palestinian wells on the outskirts of An-Nassariya, a village north-east of Nablus.

(Ma'an News Agency)

An Israeli military court handed down five consecutive life prison terms to a Palestinian who had confessed to stabbing to death a settler couple and three of their children in "Itamar" settlement last March. (Reuters)

Turkey was in talks with the countries-organizers of the *Flotilla of Freedom-2* to send a second humanitarian convoy to the Gaza Strip, the Foundation for Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Aid (IHH) said. "Some 22 non-governmental organizations will join *Flotilla of Freedom-2*. The humanitarian aid would be sent to Gaza as soon as the Turkish side agreed with the countries-organizers," an IHH member said. (Trend News Agency)

The heads of Christian churches in Jerusalem issued a communiqué expressing the need to intensify prayers and diplomatic efforts for peace between Palestinians and Israelis. The communiqué, signed by 10 Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran and Orthodox Church leaders, said that they supported Palestinian independence but believed the conflict with Israel was best achieved by negotiations. It further stated that Palestinians and Israelis should exercise restraint, whatever the outcome of the vote at the UN. (Caritas, The Jordan Times)

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Israeli forces detained three Palestinians near Qalqilya after raiding Azzun village. An Israeli military spokesman said that he was not aware of any detentions in Qalqilya but said that a Palestinian had been detained in Beituniya near Ramallah overnight. (Ma'an News Agency)

The Israeli army had intensified its presence in the West Bank for fear of demonstrations during the vote for membership of the State of Palestine at the UN, according to *Yediot Ahronot*. (Wafa)

Nimr Hamad, a senior aide to PA President Abbas, told *Army Radio* that the PA would agree to return to peace negotiations with Israel if only one of two criteria were met: an immediate halt to all settlement construction or an Israeli declaration that the borders of the Palestinian State will be based on the pre-1967 lines, with mutually agreed upon land swaps. (The Jerusalem Post)

Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman warned that there would be "harsh and grave consequences" if the Palestinians persisted with their plan to seek UN membership as a State. He did not elaborate. (AFP, Ma'an News Agency)

"Going to the United Nations to request full membership for Palestine in the international organization is an inevitable thing and there is no retreat from it," PA President Abbas said in an Egyptian television interview. "Despite the pressures exercised on us, Palestine will go to the United Nations on the 23rd of the current month to request full membership," he added. (Wafa)

In an interview with *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini said, "It would be a mistake now for the Palestinians to demand recognition as a State in the Security Council... This is divisive. It would be unpleasant also for several Arab States. Think what would happen if the United States vetoed it. Millions would be disillusioned." (AFP)

The Ambassadors of Egypt, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as their Palestinian counterpart, met with Croat Željko Končić, who currently holds Bosnia's rotating Security Council presidency, in Sarajevo, to ask for Bosnia's support for the "justified Palestinian demand before the UN." (The Daily Star)

Hamas had distanced itself from the PLO's upcoming bid for full membership in the UN. (Reuters, Al Jazeera)

Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan called for tolerance in the Middle East by recognizing a Palestinian State, which he saw as key to stability and peace in the region.

(Wafa)

On her visit to the Middle East, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton stated: "I hope that in the coming days what we'll be able to achieve together will be something that enables the negotiations to start. That is ... the mandate that I have." Ms. Ashton had extended her trip to hold more talks aimed at averting the Palestinian bid at the UN. According to an EU diplomat, Ms. Ashton would hold an additional meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu. She had already met with Defense Minister Barak and Foreign Minister Liberman. (www.consilium.europa.eu, Reuters)

United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Robert Serry said that, based on his contacts with the Palestinians, "I feel that it is now too late to stop the Palestinian train, so to say, which is now on its way to New York." In a speech at a counter-terrorism conference near Tel Aviv, Mr. Serry said that he was involved with international mediators "to try to ensure there is also life after New York." (Reuters)

Former US President Jimmy Carter said that he supported the Palestinians' effort to secure recognition at the UN. He said that he would not be in favour of the bid if

the Obama Administration had "put forward any sort of a comprehensive peace proposal"; however, since no deal was in the works, Palestinians had few other options. (AP)

US Special Envoy for Middle East Peace David Hale and senior White House aide Dennis Ross were expected to return to Israel and the OPT this week to try to sway the Palestinians to drop their efforts at the UN and bring the parties back to the talks. (AP, Reuters)

Representatives attending the Conference of the Cultural and Social Committee of the Asian Parliaments Assembly in Tehran declared unanimity over the UN recognition of a Palestinian State, the President of the Conference said. (IRNA)

The report of the Office of the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO) to the AHLC entitled "Palestinian State-building: an achievement at risk" lauded PA's State-building achievements but warned of a dramatically widening gap between far-reaching institutional progress and a stagnant political process, as noted in a press release. (www.unsco.org)

PA Prime Minister Fayyad said that the PA was succeeding in reducing its dependency on foreign aid. (Ma'an News Agency)

World Bank Managing Director Sri Mulyani Indrawati signed an agreement with the Ambassador of Kuwait to the United States, Sheik Salem Abdullah Al Jaber Al-Sabah, to transfer \$50 million to the World Bank-administered multi-donor trust fund to support the ongoing Palestinian Reform and Development Programme. (Wafa)

A group of five independent United Nations human rights experts, including Richard Falk, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, criticized the conclusion of the report of the Panel of Inquiry on the flotilla incident of 31 May 2010 that Israel's naval blockade of the Gaza Strip was legal. The group rejected that conclusion saying that the blockade had subjected Gazans to collective punishment in "flagrant contravention of international human rights and humanitarian law". They stressed that "the Palmer report does not recognize the naval blockade as an integral part of Israel's closure policy towards Gaza, which has a disproportionate impact on the human rights of civilians". (www.ohchr.org)

The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHN) issued a statement expressing concern over how to deal with the fall-out of the September UN initiative and urging the convening of a regular forum of consultation among all civil society activists to that effect. The statement also reaffirms ICAHD's commitment to the struggle for Palestinian self-determination. (www.icahd.org)

Two pro-Israel groups in the US – The Israel Project and J Street – spoke out against cutting US aid to the PA, threatened by the Congress if the Palestinians seek full membership at the UN while Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, told Reuters that no one wanted to see security aid to the PA get cut, but that he believed the Palestinians should pay a price for ignoring US views. (Reuters)

Israeli forces detained Fatah secretary Adnan Ghaith in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Silwan, a Fatah official said. Mr. Ghaith was expelled from Jerusalem in January by Israeli authorities and banned from entering the city for eight months. (Ma'an News Agency)

The Trade Union Congress, representing 6.5 million workers in the United Kingdom, reaffirmed existing policy to "work closely with the Palestine Solidarity Campaign to actively encourage affiliates, employers and pension funds to disinvest from, and boycott the goods of, companies who profit from illegal settlements, the Occupation and the construction of the Wall." (MEMC)

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The Israeli navy detained five Palestinian fishermen and confiscated their boat off the coast of Rafah. (Wafa)

Palestinian Security Spokesman Adnan ad-Dhamiry denied reports in the Israeli media that the PA had been buying tear gas and rubber bullets in the run up to the UN bid. (Ma'an News Agency)

The Israeli army arrested Hamas Palestinian Legislative Committee member Fadel Hamadan in his El-Bireh home, near Ramallah, Hamas officials said. The military had no immediate comment. (AFP)

Mahmoud al-Habbash, PA Minister of Waqf and Religious Affairs, said that the future Palestinian State would be a civilized nation open to people of all religions, and called an Israeli media report to the contrary "manipulation". (Ma'an News Agency)

Senior Hamas official Ahmad Yousef said that "Hamas' position regarding the [UN] bid is neutral. We will not oppose a move that might be fruitful for Palestinians." (Wafa)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, at meetings with US, EU and Quartet envoys, spoke of his concerns about a possible Palestinian recourse to the International Criminal Court in The Hague on the settlements issue. (AFP, Haaretz)

US Secretary of State Clinton said that she did not want to set odds of success for the US-led diplomatic effort to ward off the Palestinians' UN bid, but that she saw a "growing recognition" among the "parties in the region" that it would be best for the Palestinians to abandon the bid for UN membership. (The Jerusalem Post)

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told a press conference: "I am asking [the parties] to enter into meaningful negotiations and the international community has a duty to create some conditions favourable to this." (AFP)

A meeting was held between Fatah and Hamas in Gaza, which touched upon the upcoming Palestinian bid at the UN. Hamas leader Ismail Radwan said that the meeting had focused on the unresolved facets of the reconciliation agreement. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu said that he would address the UN on 23 September to set out Israel's objections to the Palestinians' bid for membership. (AP)

EU diplomats said that EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton was trying to negotiate a package that could include a statement by the Quartet laying out guidelines for future talks. In Brussels, diplomats said that her proposal included a [UN] text that would not rule out full UN membership for a Palestinian State in the future, but focused for now on a lesser upgrade of their status, coupled with a specific mention of talks. (Reuters)

According to an EU press release, the EU will make a contribution of approximately €16.3 million to the payment of the August salaries and pensions of more than 83,000 Palestinian civil servants and pensioners in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This contribution was to be funded by the European Commission (€11.0 million), Finland (€1.0 million) and Sweden (approximately €4.3 million). (Wafa)

"We are very much concerned by the significant increase in settler violence and aggression against Palestinians," PA Spokesman Ghassan Khatib said. "That might bring us back to the vicious circle of violence that we all wanted to avoid." Three cars were torched in the village of Beit Furik, outside Nablus. (Reuters)

Settlers attacked three Palestinian motorists, who were dragged from their cars and beaten, while their cars were set on fire in the village of Beit Furik, near Nablus. (MEMC)

Israeli military handed out five new house demolition orders to five families in the village of Khallet al-Hajjar, near Hebron. (MEMC)

PA Prime Minister Fayyad condemned the Israeli demolition campaign targeting al-Aqaba, a village in the Tubas area of the northern parts of the Jordan valley, where a house and two streets were destroyed. (Wafa)

Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan said that Israel could not do "whatever it wanted" in the eastern Mediterranean, and that Turkish warships could be there at any moment. The only way to normalize the situation, he added, was for Israel to offer an official apology for the 2010 raid on the Gaza-bound aid flotilla. (MEMC, Reuters, Ynetnews)

Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations Riyad Mansour and members of the civil society group "Palestine Deserves" spoke to the media at UN Headquarters on the "Flying chair" campaign in support of the bid at the UN. (www.unmultimedia.org)

The Chief PLO Representative in Washington, D.C., Maen Ariakat, said that a mass demonstration would be organized in front of UN Headquarters on 23 September, coinciding with President Abbas' statement to the General Assembly. (Wafa)

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During a meeting with the US Special Envoy for Middle East Peace, David Hale, PA President Abbas reaffirmed that the Palestinian bid at the UN the following week did not conflict with the peace process. (MEMC)

Israel would agree to upgrade the PA's status at the UN as long as it was not declared a State, Prime Minister Netanyahu said in talks with EU High Representative

for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton. (Haaretz)

Romania's Foreign Minister said that his country would abstain from voting on Palestinian statehood if the issue arose at the General Assembly. (AP)

India will support a Palestinian bid for membership of the UN at a meeting of the General Assembly, Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai said in New Delhi. (Asiantribune.com)

The House Committee on Foreign Affairs of the US Congress discussed possible punitive measures against the Palestinians, including closing the PLO mission in Washington, D.C., should the Palestinians go ahead with plans to seek full membership at the UN. (Haaretz)

A Palestinian man stabbed an Israeli settler and another settler opened fire, shooting the Palestinian in the leg, near the village of Qusra, south of Nablus. Both wounded were hospitalized with no life-threatening injuries. Following the incident, Israeli forces raided the village, injuring 10 persons by firing tear gas and rubber bullets. (AP, Ma'an News Agency, The Jerusalem Post)

At least four Palestinians were wounded in violent clashes with Jewish settlers and Israeli soldiers in the West Bank village of Qasra near Nablus. According to witnesses, a group of Jewish settlers had attacked the villagers. (Xinhua)

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Israel's Ministry for Public Security confirmed that it had prepared a draft plan for putting in place emergency law regulations to deal with possible massive protests and disruption of order in the wake of a declaration of an independent Palestinian State. The plan would curtail the rights of those detained, or under arrest, and give the police forces additional means to regain control. (Haaretz)

The PA Ambassador to Germany, Saleh Abdel-Shafi, said that the Palestinians would drop their bid to achieve full UN membership in exchange for EU recognition of the PA as an observer State at the General Assembly. "We are still negotiating with the Europeans," Mr. Abdel-Shafi told the *Financial Times Deutschland*. "We'll be willing to forgo the Security Council bid if European States support us at the Assembly vote," he said. (Ynet News)

Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, speaking before a meeting of the Palestinian Legislative Council, reiterated Hamas' rejection of the UN membership bid for Palestine, warning that Palestinian rights must be protected. However, he also said that Hamas would "not place obstacles in the way of the establishment of a Palestinian State with full sovereignty". (AFP)

Palestinians efforts to be accepted as a full member of the UN would fail because such a move must go through the Security Council, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu said at his weekly cabinet meeting, adding that he was convinced that the United States would veto such a move. Referring to the possibility that the Palestinians might seek a resolution in the General Assembly, Mr. Netanyahu played down the significance of such a vote but admitted that any resolution could be passed in that body. (The Jerusalem Post)

US Secretary of State Clinton held talks with EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton "to talk about the way forward", Ms. Clinton said. (Reuters)

The Middle East Quartet met as part of an intense effort to persuade the Palestinians to drop their UN plans. The Quartet's Special Envoy, Tony Blair, said he hoped that a deal could be reached at the General Assembly before PA President Abbas carried out a vow to seek Security Council recognition of a Palestinian State.

"What we will be looking for over the next few days is a way of putting together something that allows their claims and legitimate aspirations for statehood to be recognized, while actually renewing the only thing that's going to produce a State – which is a negotiation directly between the two sides", Mr. Blair told ABC television. "Let's see if we can craft something that allows the Palestinians to come to the UN to advance their aspirations for statehood that at the same time allows us to develop a framework for negotiations so that they get back to talking," he added. (AFP, Reuters)

Norwegian Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Støre said that his country would back Palestinian officials in their appeal to the UN for statehood. In a Facebook post, he wrote: "Palestinians have the right to go to the UN" and Norway was "ready to recognize a Palestinian State." (AP)

The US proposal to the PA, delivered at the last minute by US envoys Hale and Ross, did not meet the Palestinian demands and, thus, convinced PA President Abbas that the US was not serious in trying to negotiate peace, said Nabil Sha'ath, a member of the Palestinian negotiating team. For instance, the plan to delineate borders for land did not refer to Israeli settlements as illegal, instead attributing their presence to demographic trends since 1967. (www.monstersandcritics.com)

Several hundred Palestinian and Israeli women demonstrated on each side of Israel's Qalandiya checkpoint, the main passage point between Jerusalem and Ramallah, under the slogan "Women want an independent Palestine". (AFP)

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At a military checkpoint in Hebron, Israeli forces detained two Palestinian boys who had been on their way to school. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli soldiers raided with tanks the entrance to the West Bank city of Jenin, set up two military checkpoints and inspected the south of the city, according to witnesses. (Wafa)

PA Prime Minister Fayyad held talks with Israeli Defense Minister Barak in New York. "There was a short meeting between the two and they discussed the UN bid, security and other issues," a diplomat told AFP, on condition of anonymity. (AFP)

The Maldivian Foreign Minister, Ahmed Naseem, said in a statement that the Maldivian Government had expressed its support for UN recognition of Palestinian statehood and called upon other nations to recognize Palestine as a sovereign State. (www.haveeru.com.mv)

The AHLC commended the PA for its implementation of the Government programme over the last three years and confirmed that it would continue to provide support "to complete institution building and ensure a sustainable Palestinian economy". (www.regjeringen.no)

PA Prime Minister Fayyad received a telephone call from Saudi Minister of Finance Ibrahim Assaf informing him that Saudi Arabia would be transferring \$200 million to the Palestinian Authority. (Wafa)

Settlers opened fire on Palestinian homes in the West Bank village of Burin. In another incident, settlers tried to raid the West Bank village of Awarta, but Israeli forces prevented them from entering the village. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli settlers were preparing to march to Israeli army command offices and Palestinian towns in the West Bank, starting in the afternoon of 20 September, to protest the Palestinian bid for full membership at the UN, Israeli media reported. (Ma'an News Agency)

Religious and right-wing Israelis entered the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, the Al-Aqsa Foundation for Waqf and Heritage said. (Ma'an News Agency)

Priests in the Holy Land used their sermons to give their blessings to the Palestinians' bid for UN membership. A joint statement by Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran and Orthodox priests pledged their "support for the diplomatic efforts being deployed to win international recognition for the State of Palestine... on the June 1967, borders with Jerusalem as our capital." (AFP)

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An IDF unit arrested, near Nablus, and took in for questioning a Palestinian man. He was found in possession of two guns, bullets, an army illuminating bomb and a metal club. (Ynet News)

The Israeli army searched dozens of homes and arrested five Palestinians, among them minors, from the West Bank city of Hebron. (Palestine News Network)

PA President Abbas said that he was sticking to his plan to seek full UN membership for a Palestinian State. Speaking to journalists on his flight to New York, Mr. Abbas said that the Palestinian leadership had seriously discussed all proposals put forward by the Middle East Quartet and its Special Envoy, Tony Blair. The proposals, however, did not support the goal of a sovereign Palestinian State, with East Jerusalem as its capital, he said. "We are now focusing on the UN Security Council and other international institutions like the World Bank, which applauded our success in building state institutions". Mr. Abbas was scheduled to meet with the Russian Federation Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, to discuss international developments and proposals on the bid. (Ma'an News Agency)

France was to offer the Palestinians a compromise plan for the PA to gain non-full UN member status, according to the London-based Arabic-language paper *al-Hayat*. (Ria Novosti)

In a statement, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu said, "I call on the President of the Palestinian Authority to open up direct negotiations in New York and that they

resume in Jerusalem and in Ramallah.” PA President Abbas told *Fox News*: “I will meet any Israeli official any time,” although he added that “there is no use if there is nothing tangible.” (*Haaretz*, www.aljazeera.net)

US Democratic Senator Chris Coons and Republican Senator Johnny Isakson, the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, said that they had written to 23 African leaders urging them to oppose the Palestinian UN bid, cautioning the leaders that such a move “would run counter to the cause of peace”. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Bosnia and Herzegovina and Colombia were under pressure to oppose the Palestinian membership bid at the Security Council, with Palestinians holding several meetings with them to secure their votes, according to Hanna Amirah, a member of the PLO Executive Committee. “The Palestinians have secured the rest of the Council Member States favourable to the Palestinian cause”, he said, stressing that the Russian Federation and China, two permanent members, would vote in favour of the resolution. He also said, “The US is currently convincing France and Britain to veto the resolution to make it a triple veto. [...] We have promises from France and Britain, however, not to veto the resolution, but those countries have not announced their decisions yet”. (*gulfnews.com*)

The Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations, Ron Prosor, said that it was still unclear if the Security Council would vote to recognize a Palestinian State because Portugal remained undecided on the issue. Among the countries still in play on the Security Council, according to Israeli officials, were Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, France, Gabon, Germany, Nigeria, Portugal and the United Kingdom. The countries expected to vote for the resolution were Brazil, China, India, Lebanon, the Russian Federation and South Africa. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

US envoys Ross and Hill, and European negotiators, have urged Israel to refrain from taking punitive measures against the Palestinians if they pressed ahead with their bid to win recognition of their State at the UN. (*Haaretz*)

Fatah officials denied that they had agreed with Hamas not to hold rallies in Gaza to back the Palestinian bid at the UN. (*Xinhua*)

In an interview with *The Wall Street Journal*, Jordan’s King Abdullah II said, “...Israel has to decide – does it want to be part of the neighbourhood or does it want to be fortress Israel... my best way to describe my view toward Israel is my increasing frustration because they are sticking their head in the sand and pretending that there is not a problem”. (*The Wall Street Journal*)

PA Monetary Authority Governor Jihad al-Wazir that a formal call for Palestinian statehood at the UN “would have a major impact on the economic situation in the West Bank if you lose \$500 million [in US aid] from financial support for development in the West Bank... the risk of a PA collapse is very real under the financial strain, without US assistance, without donor assistance in general.” (*Reuters*)

According to a survey released by the Palestinian Chamber of Commerce, unemployment rates in the Gaza Strip had declined months after Israel eased sanctions on commercial crossing points, from nearly 40 per cent to 25.6 per cent during the second quarter of 2011. (*Xinhua*)

Settlers from Rababa settlement near Salfit, in the northern West Bank, cut down 500 olive, almond and fig trees, planted on Palestinians’ land in the Qarawat Bani Hassan and Deir Istiya villages north-west of Salfit. They also destroyed 24 dunums of land in the area of Abu Idris in Salfit. (*Wafa*)

The Secretary-General of the OIC, Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, condemned the storming of the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem by extremist settlers. (www.oic-oci.org)

PA President Abbas met with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at Headquarters, informing him of his intention to submit to the Secretary-General on 23 September an application for membership in the UN. The Secretary-General informed President Abbas of his intention to perform his duties under the Charter. He reiterated his support for the two-State solution, stressing his desire to ensure that the international community and the two parties could find a way forward for resuming negotiations within a legitimate and balanced framework, and discussed with the PA President the ongoing Quartet efforts in this regard. President Abbas stressed his commitment to a negotiated solution. (www.un.org)

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Israeli sources reported that a Palestinian-Israeli team had been formed to coordinate the activities of the Israeli army and Palestinian security forces in the event of clashes following the declaration of a Palestinian State at the UN, to prevent Palestinian protesters from marching towards Israeli settlements. (*IMEMC*)

In Nazareth, Israeli police arrested 54 Palestinians workers from the West Bank as part of its state of alert in the face of the upcoming vote for the Palestinian bid at the UN. (*Wafa*)

PA Foreign Minister Malki said that Palestinian officials had so far enlisted the support of at least six or seven members of the Security Council in their UN bid, adding, “They are trying to convince two or three more Security Council members to vote in favour of accepting Palestine as a UN member State”. (*Haaretz*)

South Africa’s President Jacob Zuma said that South Africa would support Palestine’s quest at the UN this week. (www.timeslive.co.za)

Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez Frías forwarded an open letter supporting full membership in the UN for a Palestinian State. (*The Wall Street Journal*)

Israeli President Shimon Peres spoke to the Presidents of Austria and Bosnia-Herzegovina requesting that they oppose the Palestinian UN membership bid. (*Haaretz*)

Israeli Defense Minister Barak convinced Nigeria not to support the Palestinian bid, a statement from the Defense Ministry reported. As part of the lobbying efforts, Mr. Barak met with Nigerian President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan in New York. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

US Secretary of State Clinton and Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov discussed elements of a statement to be drafted by the Quartet that would help establish a pathway back to negotiations over time, a senior US official said. Senior US, European, Israeli, and Palestinian officials told *CNN* that diplomatic efforts centred on President Abbas delivering a letter to the Security Council seeking full [UN membership], but not forcing a Council vote. The letter would be paired with a Quartet statement laying out the terms of reference of peace talks, the core elements to include a Palestinian State based on 1967 borders, with agreed-upon swaps, the recognition of two States for two peoples and a timeline for a peace deal, diplomats said. “Just because [President Abbas] sends a letter to the Council doesn’t mean there has to be a vote,” one senior European diplomat said. “The message we get from the Palestinians is that they definitely want to find a diplomatic solution.” A senior Palestinian official confirmed that the idea was being seriously considered as an option. “It actually is a good idea because it is like a Damocles [sword] hanging over our heads,” one senior US official said. “It creates an urgency to start negotiations.” An Israeli official indicated openness to the plan. (*CNN*, *The Jerusalem Post*)

China’s Foreign Ministry Spokesman Hong Lei said, “As for the matter of the Palestinians independently establishing a State and applying to the United Nations, we express understanding, respect and support,” adding, “At the same time, we believe that the international community should also step up efforts to ensure an early return to talks between the Palestinians and Israel.” (*The Jerusalem Post*)

According to an Israeli official speaking on condition of anonymity, Prime Minister Netanyahu was allowing some of his ministers to talk about imposing punitive measures in retaliation to the Palestinian UN bid, but nothing had been decided, adding that Washington and the EU had “made it clear that they oppose any economic sanctions”. Israeli media reports suggested that Defense Minister Barak and Intelligence Minister Dan Meridor opposed sanctions, arguing that provoking the economic collapse of the PA risked plunging the West Bank into chaos that could result in new violence against Israel as well as international criticism. (*AFP*, *Haaretz*)

A source said that OIC Secretary-General İhsanoğlu had intensified contacts with several European and international parties to rally support for the right of Palestinians to gain international recognition and UN membership. Mr. İhsanoğlu said that it had become necessary, now more than ever, to have a real role for the international community in the recognition of the Palestinian borders. (*gulfnews.com*)

President Obama would be meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu the following day while no talks had been scheduled with President Abbas, National Security Adviser Ben Rhodes said. French President Nicolas Sarkozy would be meeting with Mr. Abbas during the day to break the impasse. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

An estimated 20,000 people participated in a demonstration in Buenos Aires in support of the Palestinian bid at the UN. The demonstration was organized by the Argentina Solidarity Committee. (*Ma’an News Agency*)

A European Union Police Mission in the Palestinian Territories press release stated that Italy and Cyprus had donated 31 Italian-made motorbikes to the Palestinian civil police to raise the operational capability of the police and enhance road safety. (*Wafa*)

Ghassan Douglas, the PA official monitoring settlements, said that settlers from “Yizhar”, near Nablus, had attacked the village of Assira al-Qiblieh, south of Nablus, and stoned Palestinians houses and clashed with the residents. (*Wafa*)

Settlers from the "Zufin" settlement set fire to fields behind an area of the separation wall in Qalqilya, witnesses said, adding that Palestinian firefighters had been denied access to the area by Israeli soldiers stationed at a gate in the separation wall. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Settlers tried to storm Araaba, a town south-west of Jenin, according to witnesses, but were stopped and dispersed by Israeli forces. (*Wafa*)

In a press release, Ghassan Khatib, Director of the PA Media Centre, called on the international community to immediately interfere to stop settlers' attacks that had recently intensified against Palestinians. He cited the attack on the villages of Ainabous, where settlers had burned crops, and in Deir Estia, where they had cut more than 500 olive trees, along with 40 other attacks against Palestinians documented during the past month. (*Wafa*)

PA Minister for Prisoners Affairs Issa Qaraqe said that the Israeli Prison Service had cancelled family visits for 500 Palestinian prisoners in several Israeli jails for one to two months. He also said that Shin Bet had been using psychological and physical torture such as forcing prisoners to sit in a tiny chair with hands and feet tied or forcing them to stand up in a closet, depriving them of sleep and using violent shaking. Mr. Qaraqe said that Shin Bet had interrogated the prisoners under the threat of murder, home demolition, rape or the arrest of wives in "a blatant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention". (*arabnews.com*)

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Light clashes broke out at the Qalandiya checkpoint between Jerusalem and Ramallah between IDF soldiers and Palestinian youths. At least one injury was reported. About 40 Palestinians also clashed with IDF forces near Beit Omar. In another incident east of Hebron, some 200 Palestinians stoned Israeli forces who used "crowd-control measures". The PA issued several statements urging West Bank Palestinians to avoid clashing with Israeli forces. (*The Jerusalem Post, Ynetnews*)

Sources told *Wafa* that Israeli forces had stormed Sair, a town north of Hebron, and Tabaqa, a village west of Hebron, firing tear gas towards Palestinian houses. (*Wafa*)

An Israeli baby was slightly injured when Palestinians threw rocks at the car she was in near the "Migdalim" settlement, *Israel Radio* reported. (*The Jerusalem Post, Ynetnews*)

PA President Abbas will address the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) on 6 October. PACE press officials said that the speech by Mr. Abbas would be preceded by discussions and a decision by the Assembly on a Palestinian demand to be granted "partner for democracy status". (*KUNA*)

"We are ready to return to the negotiations as soon as Israel agrees to stop construction in the settlements and accepts the 1967 borders as the reference for the peace talks," Nabil Abu Rudeineh, a spokesman for PA President Abbas said in response to President Obama's address at the UN. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told the General Assembly: "In the Middle East, we must break the stalemate. We have long agreed that Palestinians deserve a State. Israel needs security. Both want peace. We pledge our unrelenting efforts to help achieve that peace through a negotiated settlement." (www.un.org)

"I am convinced that there is no short cut to the end of a conflict that has endured for decades. Peace will not come through statements and resolutions at the UN," President Obama said in an address to the General Assembly. "Ultimately, it is Israelis and Palestinians – not us – who must reach agreement on the issues that divide them: on borders and security; on refugees and Jerusalem," the text of his address said. (*Reuters*)

President Obama told PA President Abbas at a meeting that the US would veto any Security Council move to recognize Palestinian statehood, the White House National Security Council Spokesman, Ben Rhodes, told reporters. (*BBC, Haaretz, Reuters*)

US and European diplomats said that they expected PA President Abbas to formally apply for UN membership through the Security Council. Officials briefed on diplomacy said that Washington and its European allies would refrain from a quick vote at the Council and refer the application to a panel for further study. The process, which could take months, would allow the Quartet to continue negotiating with the Palestinians and Israelis to try to create a new negotiating framework. (*The Wall Street Journal*)

PLO Secretary-General Yasser Abed Rabbo and members of PLO delegation in Washington, D.C., said that President Obama's address had showed a "double standard" and that there was "a gap between praising the struggle of Arab peoples for the sake of freedom and between an abstract call for negotiations between us and the Israelis". Palestinian officials from various factions voiced criticism of Mr. Obama's address and accused him of "adopting Israel's stance" to win over the Jewish vote in the upcoming presidential elections. Hamas Spokesman Fawzi Barhoum said that the speech "was a poor attempt to rescue Israel out of its crisis through fake calls that have no credit for the Palestinians." (*Haaretz, Reuters, Xinhua, Ynetnews*)

At a joint press conference, Prime Minister Netanyahu thanked President Obama for speaking out against any UN bid to declare Palestinian statehood. Israeli Defense Minister Barak said that Mr. Obama's address to the General Assembly was proof of the strong relationship between the American leader and Israel. Foreign Minister Liberman described the statement as "encouraging". He said that "peace can only be achieved through peace talks", yet, he stated that Israel "has the right to build and expand its settlements". (*IMEMC, Haaretz, The Jerusalem Post*)

PLO's senior official Sha'ath told reporters that the PA would give the Security Council time to "consider first our full membership request before heading to the General Assembly". (*Reuters, The Jerusalem Post*)

PA Foreign Minister Malki said that the PA had the support of seven countries in the Security Council and that he believed that the PA would succeed in securing the nine votes necessary, *Aljazeera* reported. Mr. Malki added that he was "amazed" at the efforts made by the United States in persuading other States to oppose the Palestinian bid. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

The Prince of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, in his address to the General Assembly, said "After the failure of peace talks between the Palestinians and the Israelis, and the ongoing Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories and the Golan Heights, as well as the tightening Israeli blockade and the bombing of civilians in Gaza, the Palestinians have the right to be free and create their independent State." (*IMEMC*)

French President Nicolas Sarkozy, in his address to the General Assembly, called on the UN to admit Palestine as a non-member State. He also called for "one year to reach a definitive agreement" between Israel and the Palestinians, saying the usual US-led peace process should not bypass European, Arab or other countries. (*AP, The New York Times*)

The President of Senegal, Abdoulaye Wade, expressed support for Palestine's UN application for statehood. "We ought to do more than have one person or one country mediate in such a complicated situation" [as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict], he added. (www.un.org)

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk said that Poland's position on the UN bid would depend on the wording of the resolution. He noted Poland's decades-long good relations with the Arab nations, and especially with the Palestinians. But he said that Poland would be "tough" in making sure that no changes in the region threatened Israel's security. (*AP*)

Answering a question on whether the Palestinian move would receive the support of the Russian Federation in the Security Council, Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov responded: "Of course. Certainly." (*The Voice of Russia*)

Viet Nam supports Palestine's efforts to become a UN member, *Viet Nam News Agency* quoted Foreign Ministry Spokesman Luong Thanh Nghi as saying. (*Bernama*)

Israel should accept the decision if the UN recognizes a Palestinian State, about 70 per cent of Israelis answered in a recent Hebrew University poll. The poll, conducted jointly with the Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research, in Ramallah, also found that over 80 per cent of Palestinians supported turning to the UN. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Israel may withhold as much as 40 per cent of Palestinians' financial revenue should they persist in pushing for a vote at the UN, Israeli Finance Minister Yuval Steinitz said. (*Bloomberg*)

Labour Member of European Parliament (MEP) Proinsias De Rossa wrote to EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton and all 27 EU Foreign Affairs Ministers urging them to back PA President Abbas in his efforts at the UN. The press release stated that the call, co-signed by five MEPs from various political groups, was backed by 168 MEPs who supported the European Parliament declaration calling for the EU to back a seat for Palestine in the UN.

(Wafa)

About 200 settlers marched in the West Bank against the Palestinian UN bid. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

"Tens of thousands of Palestinians are taking part in rallies across the West Bank," said Adnan ad-Dhaniry, spokesman for the Palestinian security services. "All security forces, around 8,000 of them, are on top of their game today to keep the rallies peaceful and maintain the safety of the participants and public property," he added. The rallies were called to support the UN initiative. (AFP)

Palestinian medical sources reported that a 44-year-old Palestinian woman was hospitalized with concussions and bruises after being attacked by settlers in Hebron. (MEMC)

The New York Times reported that the Obama Administration had solicited the assistance of Prime Minister Netanyahu in influencing the Republican Party in the US Congress to pass \$50 million in new aid to the PA last month, the money to be used for training Palestinian police officers. (MEMC, *The New York Times*) Thousands rallied across the West Bank calling on the US to back down from its threats to veto Palestine's bid for membership in the UN. In Ramallah, about 1,000 Palestinians gathered to protest against President Obama's address at the UN. (AFP, *Ma'an News Agency*)

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Twenty Palestinians were wounded during clashes with Israeli soldiers at the Qalandia terminal, north of Jerusalem. Six protesters were injured by Israeli gunfire and 14 were hospitalized for tear-gas inhalation. (MEMC)

Israeli army raided Arqa village and Burqin town, west of Jenin, and positioned a unit of soldiers in the olive groves in Jenin. (Wafa)

Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard was unlikely to instruct Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd to support a new Palestinian State, despite the members of both the Labour and Liberal parties having called for Australia to vote for the Palestinian statehood. "Direct negotiations are the only true path to peace," a spokesperson for Ms. Gillard said. (*The Australian, The Australian Jewish News*)

The President of Nigeria, Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, at a meeting with Israeli Defense Minister Barak, said that Nigeria would abstain during the Security Council vote. (www.dailytimes.com.ng)

PLO Executive Committee member Erakat said that the pursuit of UN membership would not be slowed: "We will not allow any political maneuvering on this issue." (AP)

Richard Falk, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, called upon every UN Member State to recognize the reality of Palestinian statehood, and urged Israel to listen to the will of the Palestinian people. (www.ohchr.org)

Israeli settlers set fire to 25 dunums of agricultural land in Deir Jarir, a village east of Ramallah. Also, Israeli settlers from "Yitzhar" uprooted and destroyed 60 olive trees in Madama village, south of Nablus. (Wafa)

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Israeli forces shot and killed a 33-year-old Palestinian man during clashes in the village of Qusra near Nablus. According to local residents, settlers arrived at the scene and clashed with Palestinian youths. Israeli forces arrived later and then both soldiers and settlers were seen firing weapons. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli police detained five Palestinian teens in Jerusalem after thousands of officers deployed around the city ahead of PA President Abbas' address at the United Nations. Three were detained in Beit Hanina for throwing stones and two were detained near the Al-Aqsa Mosque after trying to enter a closed-off area. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

PA President Abbas submitted an application for Palestine to become a United Nations Member State to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at UN Headquarters. According to the provisions of the Charter, the Secretary-General is tasked with verifying any letter requesting UN membership, after which he sends it to the Security Council. The application is considered by the Council, which decides whether or not to recommend admission to the 193-member Assembly. (*UN News Centre*)

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon sent Palestine's application to become a United Nations Member State to the Security Council for its consideration after receiving the bid from PA President Abbas. Mr. Ban said that he sent the application to Nawaf Salam, Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations, which holds the Council presidency for the month of September, in line with the provisions of the Charter. Any application for UN membership is considered by the Council, which decides whether or not to recommend admission to the 193-member General Assembly, which then has to adopt a resolution for the admission of a Member State. (www.un.org)

During his address to the General Assembly, PA President Abbas declared that negotiations with Israel would be "meaningless" as long as it continued building on Palestinian lands. "This policy is responsible for the continued failure of the successive international attempts to salvage the peace process. ... This settlement policy threatens to also undermine the structure of the Palestinian National Authority and even end its existence," Mr. Abbas said. To another round of applause, he held up a copy of the formal membership application and said he had asked Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to expedite deliberation of his request to have the United Nations recognize a Palestinian State in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, addressing the Assembly shortly after Mr. Abbas, said that his country was "willing to make painful compromises". Palestinians "should live in a free State of their own, but they should be ready for compromise" and "start taking Israel's security concerns seriously," Mr. Netanyahu said. (AP)

The Foreign Minister of France, Alan Juppé, said in a television interview that the Palestinians' attempt to get the Security Council to recognize their statehood was headed towards a "dead end". Separately, his spokesman said that France's suggestion that Palestine be given an intermediate status as a United Nations observer State remained on the table, despite what he said were "Israeli reservations". (AFP)

Shortly after PA President Abbas formally requested full United Nations membership, the Quartet met in New York and took note of Palestine's application. In a statement issued after their meeting, the Quartet members reiterated appeals to the Israelis and Palestinians to resume direct bilateral negotiations without delays or preconditions. The Quartet proposed a series of steps and a timetable with the aim of reaching a lasting Middle East peace agreement by the end of the following year. A preparatory meeting between the two sides would be held within a month to agree on the agenda and method for negotiations, and then, within three months, the Israelis and Palestinians would be expected to produce "comprehensive proposals... on territory and security" and to have made substantial progress on those issues a further three months later. (www.un.org)

An eight-year-old Palestinian boy was injured by a car driven by Israeli settlers in a hit-and-run incident in the village of Al-Baqaa near Hebron. (MEMC)

International and Palestinian activists in Gaza said that they planned to relaunch accompaniment of Gaza fishermen. A press statement from the Civil Peace Service in Gaza said that the mission would be the first since 20 July, when Israeli naval boats had rammed into an international volunteers' vessel, damaging its engine. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

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PA Prime Minister Fayyad, in a statement, praised the peaceful character of the public rallies of the past few days, while condemning the Israeli army's killing of a Palestinian in a village near Nablus the previous day. Mr. Fayyad said that the peaceful rallies "reflect the deep understanding and national concern of our people not to be dragged to the cycle of violence, which would give us a chance to expose the true nature of [Israeli] settlers' terrorism and the oppression by the occupiers." He urged the international community to force Israel to abide by international law and put an end to these crimes. (Wafa)

Clashes erupted between Israeli settlers and Palestinian residents of the Burin village near Nablus, in the northern West Bank, witnesses and the Israeli army said.

An Israeli settler and his 18-month-old son were killed when the man lost control of his car after being hit by stones hurled by Palestinians, Israeli police said.

Locals told a *Ma'an* correspondent that residents of the illegal Yitzhar settlement had stormed the entrance to Burin, thrown rocks at villagers and smashed the windscreen of a car. Israeli soldiers arrived at the scene and fired tear gas and stun grenades, locals said. An Israeli military spokeswoman said that Israeli civilians

had come to a road near Burin and that forces had fired riot dispersal means in response to clashes. The violence came a day after Israeli forces had killed a Palestinian man, Issam Kamal Odeh, 33, during clashes sparked by settlers who had entered the Nablus-area Qusra village. (*Ma'an News Agency*) Members of the Al Karana Dignity Tunisian Aid Convoy entered the Gaza Strip through the Rafah border terminal between the Gaza Strip and Egypt. The convoy carried aid supplies accompanied by a number of Tunisian activists. Sources in Gaza reported that convoy members would remain in Gaza for a few days and leave after handing the donated vehicles and supplies to designated humanitarian organizations. (*IMEMC news*)

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Israeli police, reinforced by border police and intelligence, raided the National Hotel in East Jerusalem and arrested its manager for violating the decision not to hold a Palestinian curricula conference, which was convened by the civil committee to preserve the Palestinian curricula, witnesses said. Jerusalemite institutions, along with the civil committee to preserve the Palestinian curricula, had called for the meeting to discuss ways to deal with and respond to efforts by the Israeli municipality of Jerusalem to distort the Palestinian curricula, which was taught in various Jerusalemite schools. (*Wafa*)

Israeli police units arrested a 7-year-old child near a sit-in tent in al-Bustan, a neighbourhood in Silwan, East Jerusalem, during confrontations. Witnesses said that Israeli forces had raided Silwan and immediately started indiscriminately firing toxic and tear-gas canisters at the residents' homes. They also ascended on rooftops and harassed residents, witnesses said. (*Wafa*)

Prime Minister Netanyahu gave a nod in the direction of the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002 during an interview with BBC's Arabic service. "I have noticed the Arab Peace Initiative. This is a huge improvement compared with the 'No's' of Khartoum," he said. "If it is open for negotiation, then this is an important opportunity," he said. According to the source in the Prime Minister's Office, Mr. Netanyahu spoke generally about the Arab Peace Initiative but had not specified whether he was referring to the initial proposal by Saudi Arabia, or the initiative that was adopted by the Arab League. Mr. Netanyahu said that it was possible to resolve the settlement issue and that those Jewish communities only take up 1.5 per cent of the West Bank. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Spain's Foreign Minister Trinidad Jiménez presented a new policy for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, declaring for the first time Israel as the homeland of the Jews and saying that the issue of Palestinian refugees should be solved in such a way that it did not compromise Israel's current demographic makeup of a Jewish majority. The Foreign Minister stressed Spain's commitment to Israel "as the embodiment of the project to create a homeland for the Jewish people." Ms. Jiménez also called for the establishment of a Palestinian State along the 1967 lines, with agreed swaps and Jerusalem as a shared capital with Israel. She said that Spain would support the General Assembly granting Palestine the status of a non-member observer State, explaining that the international community must show that it was committed to the creation of an independent Palestinian State. (*Haaretz.com*)

Dozens of Israeli settlers uprooted over 400 Palestinian-owned olive trees near Nablus, in the northern West Bank, a PA official said. Settlement Affairs official Daglas said that settlers had attacked fields between Qusra and Duma villages south of Nablus. (*Ma'an news*)

Dozens of armed Israeli settlers put up Israeli flags and posters on main and bypass roads close to Jewish settlements in the southern part of the West Bank, calling for the slaughter of Arabs and Palestinians. Racist posters were also placed along the Jerusalem-Hebron road and around all settlements extending from the southern part of Bethlehem district to the northern part of Hebron. Some of the posters read "We will slaughter all Arabs", "This is the land of our fathers and forefathers", and dozens of similar racist posters. (*IMEMC news*)

A group of extremist settlers marched provocatively in the Old City of Jerusalem in the direction of the Western Wall to celebrate the "Day of Atonement", the Jewish Yom Kippur. The settlers, who were accompanied by Israeli forces, raised Israeli flags and harassed Jerusalemites and their properties, witnesses said. (*Wafa*)

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Israeli forces arrested an 18-year-old Palestinian after having searched his home in the Silwan neighbourhood of Jerusalem. Israeli intelligence also called in four Palestinian children from Silwan for interrogation. Two of them were reportedly aged 8 and 11. (*Wafa*)

Israeli President Peres said: "I call on my friend, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, who I respect and acknowledge as the best leader Israel will work with, to return to the negotiating table". (*Haaretz*)

The Quartet statement was a significant Israeli achievement, Foreign Minister Liberman said. "I have my reservations concerning the Quartet's statement, but, at the end of the day, when the Quartet, the UN, the EU and the United States, sign a document that states that peace talks would renew without preconditions, I think that's noteworthy." (*Haaretz*)

Hamas leader Haniyeh called for an inter-Palestinian strategic dialogue to decide on a joint strategy for establishing a Palestinian State. "We are in favour of a strategic dialogue that will lead to a joint strategy regarding Palestine and activating the reconciliation we signed," he told reporters. (*AFP*)

In their General Assembly addresses over the weekend, five EU countries (Belgium, Greece, Luxembourg, Portugal and Spain) joined France in backing the upgrade of Palestine's status at the United Nations. Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Italy joined the United Kingdom in saying no. Others fell in between the two camps or were staying out of the debate at present. Finland, Malta and Sweden had not explicitly backed an upgrade but had underlined Palestine's rights and its institutional readiness for statehood while criticizing Israeli settlement-building. Denmark, Germany, Ireland and the Netherlands, as well as Romania, had not yet spoken at the UN event. (*Euobserver.com*)

German Chancellor Angela Merkel telephoned PA President Abbas to inquire about the Palestinian position on proposals to revive the stalled peace talks. Mr. Abbas told Ms. Merkel: "We understood the statement to include the 1967 borders and that not carrying out unilateral acts mean total halt to settlements."

Palestinian officials had initially reacted critically because the Quartet statement failed to directly refer to the 1967 lines or the settlements. Mr. Abbas said that the Palestinian response would come after a meeting of the Palestinian leadership. Chief Palestinian Negotiator Erekat said that Mr. Abbas would convene the PLO Executive Committee on Wednesday to discuss the Quartet proposal. (*DPA, Wafa*)

Thousands of Palestinians, cheering and waving flags, gave PA President Abbas a hero's welcome in the West Bank as he told them triumphantly that a "Palestinian Spring" had been born following his historic address at the UN the previous week. Mr. Abbas' popularity had skyrocketed since he asked the UN to recognize Palestinian independence. "We have told the world that there is the Arab Spring, but the Palestinian Spring is here," he said, "a popular spring, a populist spring, a spring of peaceful struggle that will reach its goal." He warned that the Palestinians faced a "long path" ahead. (*AP*)

Fatah and Hamas will meet in Cairo in early October to discuss Palestinian reconciliation, Fatah Central Committee member Azzam al-Ahmed announced, according to *MENA*. The meeting will address political issues and Palestine's future, *MENA* quoted Ahmed as saying. He said that regardless of some statements made by Hamas leaders, "reconciliation and national unity are bigger". "We are going ahead to achieve it," Mr. al-Ahmed said. President Abbas said the previous day that he would hold talks with Hamas about Government, reconciliation and other Palestinian issues. (*Al Masry al Youm*)

Israeli bulldozers, under the protection of Israeli soldiers, razed large areas of land in the village of Burjin in the northern West Bank, under the pretext of erecting electricity poles for the benefit of settlements, and uprooted olive trees in order to build a road that would connect those settlements to each other. (*Wafa*)

PA Presidential Spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeineh said that the PA condemned the arrest of Palestinian lawmaker Ahmad Atton during a demonstration in front of International Red Cross compound in East Jerusalem. Mr. Abu Rudeineh said that this arrest came as part of Israel's policy to drive Palestinians out of Jerusalem. (*Wafa*)

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) will allocate \$24.5 million to reconstruct homes in Gaza destroyed during Israel's last military offensive. Programme coordinator Refaat Diab said that GCC had already rebuilt 1,070 homes that had been totally destroyed in Israel's Operation Cast Lead. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Human Rights Council held a general debate on the situation of human rights in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories. It considered reports on the follow-up to the report of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict. (*www.unog.ch*)

The IDF was taking legal precautions to protect soldiers and officers who had participated in the operation to stop the docking of the *Mavi Marmara*, senior defence officials said, following Turkish news reports that intelligence agencies had compiled a list identifying 174 soldiers who could be prosecuted for their involvement in the operation. The Istanbul deputy public prosecutor, Ates Shasan Sozen, later told the *Today's Zaman* newspaper that the list was compiled by IHH or the Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief, the organization that organized the Gaza flotilla, and not by Turkish intelligence. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

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IDF soldiers arrested two Palestinians, according to Israeli sources, who had been "wanted terror suspects", in the West Bank. (*Ynetnews*)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu was to meet with eight senior ministers of his Government to report on his trip to New York and the General Assembly. Mr. Netanyahu was also expected to try to formulate an official Israeli response to the Quartet's statement. On his part, PA President Abbas was to call a meeting of the PLO leadership to discuss the Quartet's statement. (*Haaretz*)

The Security Council will hold a formal meeting the following day to transmit the Palestinian application to the Committee on the Admission of New Members, comprised of all 15 Council members. (AP)

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton said that she expected Palestinian-Israeli negotiations to start within four weeks. Addressing the European Parliament in Strasbourg, Ms. Ashton said "the way forward was to put together a package of various actions with the objective of getting Israelis and Palestinians together in talks". She added "a Quartet statement and possibly a General Assembly resolution, in addition to what President Abbas is seeking to do, would be part of such a package". (Wafa)

Nigeria would vote in favour of the Palestinian application in the Security Council, PA Foreign Minister Malki said after meeting with his Nigerian counterpart. Nigerian Foreign Minister Olugbenga Ashiru stressed Nigeria's support for the application for a Palestinian State based on the 1967 borders, as well as his hopes for a negotiated settlement to end the conflict. (Ma'an News Agency)

Addressing the UN, a Vatican representative called for "courageous decisions" toward the two-State solution for the Holy Land. Archbishop Dominique Mamberti did not say whether the Vatican explicitly supported the Palestinians' UN initiative but he said that the Vatican viewed it "in the perspective of efforts to find a definitive solution" to the Israeli-Palestinian question. (Catholic News Service)

The Knesset's "Land of Israel" caucus and the heads of four factions wrote a letter to Prime Minister Netanyahu asking him to sanction the PA for their efforts at the UN. The letter stated that sanctions would show the PA that "Israel will not agree to be its punching bag". (The Jerusalem Post)

A group of Israeli reserve officers had been "re-signing" the text of the famous "Officers' Letter" that was issued in 1978, which had called for the Prime Minister to choose peace over "Greater Israel". They planned to send the letter to Prime Minister Netanyahu in an effort to urge him to immediately launch talks with the Palestinians. (Haaretz)

Israel will not declare a new settlement freeze to get the Palestinians to agree to the Quartet's formula for a renewal of talks, Prime Minister Netanyahu told *The Jerusalem Post*. "It is a pretext they use again and again, but I think a lot of people see it as a ruse to avoid direct negotiations," Mr. Netanyahu said, adding he had no intention of intervening with the Interior Ministry's District Planning Committee discussing new construction in Jerusalem's "Gilo" [settlement]. (The Jerusalem Post)

The European Parliament was to vote on a trade agreement that would boost the Palestinian economy and help to build the Palestinian State by enabling the Palestinians to export farm and fisheries products to the EU directly, rather than through Israeli customs authorities, from early 2012. Total EU-PA trade amounted to €56.6 million in 2009, of which €50.5 million had been EU exports. (www.europarl.europa.eu)

The Israeli Government had given the final go-ahead for the construction of 1,100 new housing units in East Jerusalem's "Gilo" settlement. Construction could begin after a mandatory 60-day period for public comment. (AP, Haaretz)

US Ambassador to Israel Shapiro told *Israeli Army Radio* that Washington had never favoured making a settlement freeze a condition for negotiations: "We've never set that, in this Administration or any other, as a precondition for talks." (Reuters)

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton said: "It is with deep regret that I have learnt today about the decision to advance settlement expansion in East Jerusalem with new housing units in Gilo. This plan should be reversed. Settlement activity threatens the viability of an agreed two-State solution and runs contrary to the Israeli stated commitment to resume negotiations." (Wafa, euobserver.com)

US Secretary of State Clinton and Portuguese Foreign Minister Paulo Portas criticized Israel's announced intention to build 1,100 new settlement units in East Jerusalem. At their joint press event, Secretary of State Clinton made clear the United States' disappointment over what she termed as a "counterproductive" Israeli action. (www.voanews.com)

Speaking at a press briefing, US State Department Spokeswoman Nuland said: "We are deeply disappointed by this morning's announcement by the Government of Israel approving the construction of 1,100 housing units in East Jerusalem". She said that the US considered the Israeli move "counterproductive to our efforts to resume direct negotiations between the parties." (Reuters, Haaretz)

France condemned the Israeli Government's settlement announcement saying that the move "appears like a provocation". (www.eubusiness.com)

British Foreign Secretary William Hague condemned the Government of Israel's advancement of new settlement housing units in the East Jerusalem settlement of "Mordot Gilo". He said that settlement expansion was illegal under international law, corroded trust, and undermined the basic principle of land for peace. He called on Israel to revoke this decision. (www.fco.gov.uk)

UNSCO released the following statement: "Today's decision by Israeli authorities to advance planning for a large number of new settlement units in East Jerusalem is very concerning, and ignores the Quartet's appeal of last Friday to the parties to refrain from provocative actions. This sends the wrong signal at this sensitive time. Settlement activity is contrary to the Road Map and to international law, and undermines the prospect of resuming negotiations and reaching a two state solution to the conflict." (www.unsco.org)

Settlers attacked an elderly man from Bethlehem while he was on his way to his agricultural land. He was reportedly beaten and locked up in the settlement's jail. He was later released. (Wafa)

Three UN human rights experts called for an end to the destruction by Israeli authorities and settlers of Palestinian-owned houses and structures in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. "These actions by the Israeli authorities violate human rights and humanitarian law and must end immediately," the UN Special Rapporteurs on the right to housing, food, and drinking water said in a statement. (AFP, www.unog.ch)

Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs B. Lynn Pascoe briefed the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. "...There are now some building blocks in place that could help make negotiations more effective than before – a clear timetable, expectations that the parties must come forward with proposals, and an active role of the Quartet," he said. (UN News Centre)

Palestinian detainees in Israeli jails had started a hunger strike to protest their treatment by the Israeli prison services, said PA Minister of Prisoners Affairs Qaraqe. (Ma'an News Agency)

A group of Palestinian children who were injured during Israel's Operation Cast Lead departed for Slovenia for treatment. (Ma'an News Agency)

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Israeli Defense Minister Barak ordered the closure of the West Bank, starting 27 September and throughout the Rosh Hashanah weekend. Exceptions would be made for medical emergencies and humanitarian cases subject to the Civil Administration's discretion. (Ynetnews)

Two rockets fired from Gaza landed in open areas in southern Israel, without causing injuries, according to the Israeli army. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and Defense Minister Barak both warned in interviews that the situation in Egypt's Sinai posed a "very troubling" threat to Israel.

"There are a lot of forces that are seeking to undermine that peace ... seeking to use the Sinai not merely as a staging area for attacks from Gaza but seeking to use Gaza as a staging area for attacks from Sinai," Mr. Netanyahu told *The Jerusalem Post*. (AFP)

Serious shortcomings had been found in IDF soldiers' handling of an incident in which a Palestinian was shot to death by troops in the West Bank village of Qusra on 23 September, an army investigation had revealed. (Haaretz)

Israeli authorities said that Palestinians were to blame for a car crash that killed an Israeli father and his infant son in the West Bank the previous week. Police Spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said that the investigation had found that the Israeli man lost control of his car after he was hit in the head by a stone. (AP)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and eight senior cabinet members had been unable to reach an agreement regarding the Quartet's statement. Vice-Prime Minister Silvan Shalom said that the cabinet's response to the Quartet initiative "needs to be in the positive direction". However, he expressed two reservations in an

interview with *Army Radio* : the need to finalize the agreement within a year, and to reach agreements on borders and security within three months, which he said was impossible to do “without knowing what happens with all the other issues, primarily the right of return and Jerusalem”. (*Haaretz, The Jerusalem Post*)
If the UN were to impose sanctions against Israel, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would be solved, Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan said in an interview with *Time* magazine. The reason Israel had not been subjected to sanctions, he charged, was that the Quartet did not really want to solve the conflict. (*Haaretz*)

The Security Council met and decided to send the Palestinian application to the Committee on the Admission of New Members. (*AFP, UN press release SC/10397*)

Saudi Arabia urged the UN to accept the Palestinian request for full membership and recognize it as an independent State. It also called for restricting the veto powers of the permanent members of the Security Council to help it play an effective role in reinforcing world peace and stability. (*RTTNNews*)

Several dozen Palestinian olive trees were uprooted south of Hebron in a suspected “price tag” act by Israeli settlers, *Army Radio* reported. (*Haaretz*)

Israeli authorities notified the municipality of Beit Ummar of plans to build a bypass road for the “Kfar Etzion” settlement, which would annex over 800 dunums of village land, a local committee spokesman said. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Turkey strongly condemned the decision of the Israeli Government to build 1,100 more settlement units in East Jerusalem, questioning Israel's real intention and sincerity. (*Today's Zaman*)

“Moscow takes this [“Gilo”] report with a major concern,” a source in the Russian Federation Foreign Ministry told *Itar-Tass*. “We are particularly concerned that the decisions on such a sensitive issue are being taken as the world community ... is taking every effort to resume Palestinian-Israeli direct talks.” (*Russia Today*)

“The Government of Japan deeply deplores that, according to the news, the Israeli Government will announce the approval of the construction of 1,100 new housing units for Jewish people in Gilo of East Jerusalem on September 27,” a Foreign Ministry Statement said. (www.mofa.go.jp)

Quartet Representative Blair said that the settlement building plan “is a cause for concern at a time when we are working to restart negotiations”. He added: “Our position has always been very clear in opposing construction in settlements, and any acts that are not in accordance with the obligations of the parties in the Road Map.” (*The Jerusalem Post*)

The Office of PA Prime Minister Fayyad said: “The Israeli Prime Minister claims to have no preconditions, but with this [“Gilo”] decision is putting concrete preconditions on the ground... [Netanyahu] says there should be no unilateral steps, but there could be nothing more unilateral than a huge new round of settlement building on Palestinian land.” (*Haaretz*)

Saeb Erakat, member of the PLO Executive Committee said: “With this [settlement announcement], Israel is responding to the Quartet's statement with 1,100 ‘no's’.” (*AFP, Ma'an News Agency*)

Egypt's Foreign Minister Amr condemned Israel's “Gilo” plan: “This illegal measure represents a new and glaring Israeli defiance to the international community, which endeavours to restore credibility to the peace process,” he said in a statement released by the Foreign Ministry. “Egypt is really worried over the steady rise in the pace of settlements construction, especially in the past two months when the building of more than 6,000 homes has been approved,” he added. (*DPA, Haaretz*)

China expressed “deep regrets” and “opposition” to Israel's approval of 1,100 new settler homes in East Jerusalem, urging Israel to resume peace negotiations with the Palestinians as soon as possible. “China encourages Israel to act cautiously and take constructive approaches while actively coordinating with international efforts to resume negotiations”, Foreign Ministry Spokesman Hong Lei said at a press briefing. (*Xinhua*)

“Gilo is not a settlement, nor a settlement outpost. It is a neighbourhood which constitutes an integral part of the centre of Jerusalem,” said Mark Regev, a spokesman for Prime Minister Netanyahu. (*AFP*)

Israeli forces notified residents in Battir village near Bethlehem that land owned by 40 families – 148 dunums of vegetable, fruit and olive groves – would soon be confiscated for “security and military purposes”. The area is located close to the train line to Jerusalem and the East Jerusalem settlement of “Gilo”. The villagers would lose their houses, water wells and agricultural land. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli soldiers arrested a Palestinian from the town of Dura, south-west of Hebron and razed land in the town, according to security sources. (*Wafa*)

International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo said that if Palestinians gained an observer State status, this should, in accordance with the all-State formula, allow them to be part of the ICC. Israel's former Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Dore Gold, told the *BBC* that PA President Abbas had made the bid for statehood “to open a whole new door of going to the International Criminal Court.” (*thestar.com*)

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According to local sources, the IDF confronted a group of Palestinians in the village of Yasuf, east of Salfit, in the northern West Bank, causing three Palestinians to suffer from suffocation caused by Israeli tear gas. (*Wafa*)

According to a press release issued by the German Representative Office in Ramallah, Germany had provided a specialized training programme in the field of document security and document examination for 16 officers of the Palestinian civil police and four members of the Ministry of the Interior. (*Wafa*)

Leaders from Hamas and Fatah met in Nablus to discuss reconciliation efforts. The meeting took place in the home of Nasser al-Shaer, a former deputy to Hamas leader Haniyeh. Representing Fatah were Azzam al-Ahmad, head of the national dialogue team, and Mahmoud al-Aloul, a member of Fatah Central Committee.

(*Ma'an News Agency*)

The PLO Executive Committee, led by PA President Abbas, met in Ramallah where the leadership reiterated its push for UN recognition as an independent State and condemned Israel's latest proposal for new settlements, State-run media reported. PLO Secretary-General Rabbo read a statement after the meeting saying, “The Palestinian leadership stresses clearly that it cannot accept holding negotiations that lack the minimum limits of responsibility and seriousness amid the continuation of settlements and stealing of land”. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

After a consultation meeting by PA President Abbas with PLO and Fatah officials, Mr. Rabbo, the Secretary-General of the PLO, said that the Quartet statement contained encouraging elements but not enough to resume negotiations. The Palestinians were eager to restart talks, but Israel first had to commit to all references in the Quartet statement, “especially concerning the borders of 1967 and stopping settlement activity,” he said. (*AP*)

US Secretary of State Clinton said during a press conference with her Egyptian counterpart in Cairo: “The Quartet statement ... referenced President Obama's speech of May, where he clearly said there needs to be negotiations about territory that he said had to be reflective of the 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps; there had to be negotiations on security ... We have to urge the parties to put aside their reluctance or their distrust and begin the hard work of negotiating. And Egypt, the United States, the Quartet, everyone will stand prepared to put pressure on both sides...” (www.state.gov)

The European Parliament passed a resolution in which they described Palestine's UN bid as legitimate, stating that a solution should be based on negotiations and reached within a year. In the resolution, the Parliament underlined that “no changes to the pre-1967 borders, including with regard to Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the parties should be accepted”. It also stressed that the international community should reconfirm its strong commitment to the security of the Israel while calling on the Israeli Government to stop all settlements. It also called for the cessation of rocket attacks from the Gaza Strip and for a permanent truce. The Parliament also called upon the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton and Member States to find a common EU position on the Palestinian request and to avoid divisions. (www.europarl.europa.eu)

A spokesman for the PA said that while there was great unhappiness with Tony Blair's role as Quartet Representative, there were no plans to formally ask for Mr. Blair to be replaced. (*BBC*)

PA Foreign Minister Malki said that the Palestinians had received support from eight members of the Security Council for their membership bid: Brazil, China, Gabon, India, Lebanon, Nigeria, the Russian Federation and South Africa. He said that the Palestinians would focus their attention on persuading either Bosnia and Herzegovina or Colombia. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

The Republican leaders of the US House Appropriations Committee released a preliminary 2012 spending plan that would prohibit aid to the PA unless the State Department certified that the Palestinians were not seeking to gain full membership in the UN. (*The Los Angeles Times*)

The Israeli occupation had cost the Palestinian economy an estimated \$6.9 billion in 2010, around 85 per cent of its gross domestic product, according to a report

produced jointly by the PA [National] Economy Ministry and the Applied Research Institute-Jerusalem. The study stated that Israeli policies had kept the Palestinians dependent on foreign aid: "Had the Palestinians not been subject to the Israeli occupation, their economy would have been almost double in size." (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoğlu said that Israel's plan to construct 1,100 new homes in the "Gilo" [settlement] of Jerusalem, was "a flagrant violation of international law", Israel's *Army Radio* reported. Mr. Davutoğlu said, "The plan raises doubt about Israel's sincerity and true intention to solve the conflict," adding that continued settlement construction proved that the Palestinian attempt to gain UN recognition was both justified and timely. (*Haaretz*)

In a statement, the League of Arab States reaffirmed its solidarity and support for Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and detention centres. The League condemned the current dangerous practices by Israel, which violate the Fourth Geneva Convention, calling on the International Committee of the Red Cross and other human rights international organizations to move fast and [inspect] Israeli jails, and compel Israel to stop these practices against the prisoners. The statement said that Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails had begun open hunger strikes in 20 different prisons to protest practices such as racist treatment, torture and continuous and organized repression. (*Wafa*)

Thousands of employees at [UNRWA] schools were striking to protest the suspension of their union chairman for political activities apparently linked to Hamas. The strike closed 238 schools in Gaza, affecting more than 220,000 students. UNRWA had suspended Suhail al-Hindi from his job as a teacher for three months, citing unspecified political activities. Union officials said that the strike could be extended to UNRWA clinics if al-Hindi was not reinstated soon. (*Wafa*)

The *Miles of Smiles 6* solidarity convoy would head to the Gaza Strip in the coming days, sailing to the Egyptian port of Al Arish before heading to Gaza by land. Convoy organizers stated that there would be approximately 100 persons from Algeria, Bahrain, France, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia and the United Kingdom. Medical supplies onboard the convoy were estimated at \$1.3 million. (*IMEMC*)

The Al-Mezan Centre for Human Rights called on the international community to compel Israel to respect its obligations under international law, in particular prisoners' visitation rights. (*Wafa*)

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Israeli warplanes flew over the central Gaza Strip striking at a site from which rockets had been fired into Israel, officials said. Hamas security sources said that two Palestinian rockets had been fired into Israel on that day. In a news release, the IDF said that one rocket had caused damage to an abandoned building. The air strike hit a Hamas military base located east of the Maghazi refugee camp, Hamas security sources said. No injuries had been reported. (*CNN*)

The Security Council Committee on the Admission of New Members met to review Palestine's application. French Ambassador Gérard Araud told reporters after the closed meeting that the Committee had asked experts to determine if the request met the requirements of the Charter. Experts would review technical aspects the following week and make a report. (*AP, CNN*)

PA President Abbas will visit Security Council Member Colombia on 11 October to discuss Palestine's bid for UN Member State status, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos said in a statement. (*AFP, Xinhua*)

Quartet Representative Blair spoke out against allegations that he had profiteered from commercial deals through his diplomatic missions to the Middle East, explaining that most of the work he did had been unpaid. He told an Indian television channel: "I probably spend the biggest single chunk of my time on the Middle East peace process, which I do unpaid." (*The Independent*)

Malta's Foreign Minister, Tonio Borg, deplored in a statement Israel's decision to expand the settlement of "Gilo" in East Jerusalem, calling on the Israeli authorities to reverse this plan. He said that he fully supported EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton's request for the measure to be revoked. (www.timeofmalta.com)

An altercation between activists and residents of the West Bank settlement of Anatot took place after activists had accompanied a Palestinian who owned agricultural land within the confines of the settlement and who had come to work his land. The two sides were separated by police who arrived about an hour later. (*Haaretz*)

At a meeting of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the Committee received updates on the situation on the ground, the political process and on Committee activities. It adopted its annual report to the General Assembly. (Division for Palestinian Rights)
