

## **Unilateral Declaration Of Palestinian Independence: Points to Remember**

History's lessons are unmistakable: **Peace can only be achieved through bilateral negotiations** that address the **vital interests of both sides**.

- Examples: Peace Treaties between Israel-Egypt and Israel-Jordan.

### **Peace requires mutual recognition. Sidestepping that reality is a recipe for continued conflict.**

- Establishing a new state that does not recognize its neighbor's basic right to exist is a recipe for war and violence, not peace.
- There will be no peace until both sides are willing to accept the other as a permanent neighbor.
- In this case, that means the Palestinians cannot continue to reject Israel's right to exist.
- Successive Israeli governments, including current Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, have stated openly and repeatedly that Israel will accept a Palestinian state, alongside a Jewish state.
- Yet, the Palestinian leadership has not done the same.
  - Last month senior PA "negotiator" Nabil Sha'ath said in an interview with Arabic News Broadcast, "The story of 'two states for two peoples' means that there will be a Jewish people over there and a Palestinian people here. We will never accept this."
- Without Palestinian leaders willing to acknowledge (esp. to their own people!) that they accept a Jewish State, the Palestinian quest for statehood through UDI seems more a pretext to continue the conflict with Israel than an effort to end it.

### **Unilaterally declaring independence without including the principles of mutual recognition and renouncing violence is a flagrant attempt to *sidestep* the responsibilities of becoming a responsible member of the family of nations and a genuine partner for peace.**

"The Quartet" (composed of the United Nations, European Union, Russia, and the United States, in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict) laid out a set of three prerequisites, endorsed in 2008 by the U.N. Security Council, for the diplomatic recognition of a Palestinian government. Any Palestinian state **must**:

- **Recognize the state of Israel** without prejudging what various grievances or claims are appropriate,
- **Abide by previous diplomatic agreements**, and
- **Renounce violence** as a means of achieving goals.

The international community **must not permit Palestinian leadership through UDI to sidestep the only path to peace**. By failing to (and circumventing) the responsibilities to forswear terrorism, accept Israel's right to exist, and reaffirm prior agreements, the Palestinian leadership is choosing to perpetuate and aggravate the conflict.

**There must be clear security arrangements that address legitimate Israeli fears of constant terrorist violence.**

- Ongoing security challenges; Physical threats to Israel continue:
  - Hamas and Hezbollah have fired 12,000 rockets into Israel since it withdrew from Gaza and Southern Lebanon
  - Hamas and Hezbollah have both dramatically enlarged their arsenals.

**Even the most basic condition for statehood does not exist.**

- The Palestinian Authority does not maintain effective control of all its territory nor does it hold a monopoly on the use of force.
- The Hamas terrorist organization, whose charter calls for the destruction of Israel and the murder of Jews, still maintains de facto control in Gaza.

**This declaration will be in violation of the bilateral agreements that are the basis for Israeli-Palestinian cooperation and may prevent cooperation from happening.**

- Israelis and Palestinians collaborate economically in many ways, including through an economic regional cooperation conference. Ahead of this year's conference a survey of Palestinians found that 85% are in favor of economic cooperation with Israel.
- The city of Jenin in the West Bank serves as a model of how Israelis and Palestinians cooperate for security needs. The IDF trained PA security forces and now they work together to keep the peace.

Those who wish for peace should urge members of the UN to **reject UDI** in favor of **unconditional bilateral negotiations**. Only a negotiated solution can lead to two states living in **peace and mutual recognition**.