

PA says talk of progress exaggerated

Written by Chris Perver
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Senior officials in the Palestinian Authority have [denied](#) that any significant progress has been made in the Middle East peace process of late, contradicting recent statements made by the Israeli government to that effect. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's spokesman Mark Regev had said that talks held following the visit of US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice were the *“most serious to date, and that a peace agreement by the end of 2008 was achievable. Regev stated that the two sides had made significant progress on two issues: definition of national boundaries for the future state of Palestine, and in the field of competences over security between Israel and the state of Palestine”*. But at the time of Rice's visit to the region, Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia had [rejected](#) a proposed map drawn up by Israeli negotiators, stating they will accept nothing less than the 1949 armistice lines for the borders of a future Palestinian state. And Palestinian officials now claim that no significant progress has been made in the negotiations, and believe that the recent announcements made by the Israeli government are just an attempt to divert attention away from Olmert's latest financial scandal.

Quote: *“This is a big lie,” one official told The Jerusalem Post. “The statement was issued by Olmert's office even before President Abbas returned to Ramallah and it came as a surprise to us. We still don't know what progress he's talking about.” Another PA official said he was convinced that the “optimistic” announcement was aimed at diverting attention from the police investigation into the new financial scandal involving Olmert. “If Olmert has problems with the police because of financial corruption, that's his problem,” he said. “But he should not use the peace talks as an excuse to divert attention from the police inquiry.”*

Israel and the Palestinian Authority have been under intense pressure to be seen to be making progress in the negotiations, ahead of US President Bush's upcoming visit to the region next week. Condoleezza Rice once again urged both sides to agree on [final status borders](#), exclaiming that they need to *“draw a map and get it done”*.

It had been hoped that the two sides could have made some sort of joint-declaration, to reflect on progress made since the Annapolis peace conference last year. But that seems unlikely to happen.

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President Bush's visit has already been marred by controversy over his decision not to pray at the

[Kotel](#)

, the western retaining wall of the Temple Mount. Some feel the President has snubbed them over fears of inciting the Muslims by visiting the holy site. His trip will instead focus on Masada, the mountain-top fortress, where the Jewish rebellion against the Roman occupation was quashed. Hundreds of Jews committed suicide atop the mountain fortress rather than surrender to the advancing Roman armies. Thus it seems that President Bush's visit to Masada will be symbolic, for in effect his support for the policies of 'land for peace' and the 'two-state solution' is driving Israel towards national suicide. For

[Hamas](#)

and

[Fatah](#)

see the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel as just a stepping-stone towards the ultimate destruction of the Jewish state. The only disagreement they have is how that should be accomplished. We have a saying, 'things can only get better'. Unfortunately in the case of the Middle East, we know that the reverse is true. Things seem to only get worse, and they will get much worse according to Bible prophecy. A new map of Israel will eventually be drawn up, by the Antichrist himself (Daniel 11:39). East Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria will be handed over to the Gentiles (Zechariah 12:2, Revelation 11:2), and the greatest period of persecution the Jewish people have ever experienced will commence. But there is good news. Jesus Christ is coming back.

When Joseph told his brothers of the dreams that he had, the Bible records that his brothers replied, 'Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words' (Genesis 37:8). Fifteen hundred years later, the religious leaders of Jesus' day would do the same when confronted with the claims of Jesus Christ, crying out,

'We have no king but Caesar

' (John 19:15). Just as his brothers conspired to slay Joseph (Genesis 37:20), the Jewish leaders did the same to the Father's well-beloved Son (Genesis 37:3, Matthew 3:17). What the Jews meant for evil in crucifying the Messiah, God meant for good (Genesis 50:20). For through the blindness of Israel, salvation has come to the Gentiles (Romans 11:25). Today the identity of the true Messiah has been hidden from the eyes of the Jewish people, just as Joseph's identity was hidden from his brothers in Egypt (Genesis 42:7). But one day Yeshua will reveal Himself to His earthly people, just as Joseph revealed himself to his brothers when their hearts yearned over him (Genesis 45:3).

Genesis 45:1-4

Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself

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known unto his brethren. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I [am] Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I [am] Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

Today Jesus Christ weeps over you, because your sins have separated between you and your God (Isaiah 59:2). He beckons you to come near unto Him. Call upon Him for salvation today.

Matthew 11:28

Come unto me, all [ye] that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Source [Jerusalem Post](#) , [AGI](#) , [Jerusalem Post](#) , [Arutz 7](#)