The High Representative for the European Common, Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, has urged the new UN Secretary General to become involved in the Middle East peace process quickly, in order to find a solution to the conflict. Solana is eager to press Ban to get involved in the issue in order to build on the momentum that was generated before Christmas. It was hoped that Palestinian terrorist groups Hamas and Fatah could have clinched a deal that would pave the way for the creation of a Palestinian unity government, but the talks broke down at the last minute .
Solana stated in December that he was deeply disappointed that an opportunity had been lost. The High Representative hopes to schedule a meeting with the Quartet this month to press for movement on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. The EU is also due to meet this month to discuss Spain's Declaration of Alicante .

Quote: *"Within the Middle East, I'd like to insist as strongly as possible that we have to tackle the peace process between Israelis and Palestinians," Mr. Solana said after his meeting with Mr. Ban yesterday, adding that he hoped the new secretary-general would play a "strong role" within the quartet. Europe is "going to call the first meeting of the quartet soon, probably this month" at the sidelines of the January 25 Paris donors meeting on Lebanon, Mr. Solana added. "This must be for us the priority of great, great significance in this period of time."*

Meanwhile, former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres scorned Defence Minister Amir Peretz' new "roadmap" initiative today, exclaiming that Israel and the Palestinians don't need a new peace plan, they need the existing ones to be implemented.

Quote: *"During a visit to the Negev, Peres said: "I don't believe we need to come up with something new everyday. Plans can be drafted everyday, but they also need to be implemented."*

Source NY Sun , YNet News