Javier Solana , the High Representative for the European Common, Foreign and Security Policy, arrived in the Middle East today for a four-day diplomatic tour of the region. He is due to meet Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in Cairo this evening. Tomorrow morning he will meet Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Foreign Minister Abul Gheit and the Arab League secretary-general Amr Moussa. On Tuesday Solana will travel to Ramallah to meet with Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, the chairman of the Palestinian negotiating team Ahmed Qurei, Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat and Secretary of the PLO Yasser Abed Rabbo . Solana will be seeking to build consensus ahead of the upcoming international peace conference to be held in Annapolis later this month. He is also due to visit the EU Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS) as well as the Jericho police training centre where he will be given a presentation on public order training. Javier Solana has praised Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's "constructive" approach to the Annapolis conference, and believes that there is a good chance it will have a successful outcome.

Quote: *""Olmert yesterday gave a very constructive speech, one of his best in recent times," Solana told reporters. "If that is the spirit with which he is approaching the Middle East peace process, I think we have many chances of having a positive outcome." The Israeli Prime Minister had declared the day before that he was willing to deal with the core issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at the conference. "The conference will be the start of a future process ... we will enter into intense and continuous negotiations," he said. Olmert also said he hoped for the negotiations could be completed before January 2009. Solana said Europe shared Olmert's hopes of seeing the peace process bring about results by that date.*

The other "mover and shaker" in the Middle East, Israeli President Shimon Peres , is also on a diplomatic tour of the region. He landed in Turkey this morning on a three day visit to the country. He praised Turkey's role in the Middle East, citing it as an important player in the region with regards to Syria and the United States. Peres and Abbas are due to address the
Turkish parliament
next week, the first time an Israeli president will have addressed a Muslim parliament, although strictly speaking Turkey is a secular country.

So while not so much is happening at the present, clearly there will be dramatic days ahead in the run up to this conference, and following the event itself. We don't know if this conference will be a success or not, but what we do know is that an agreement may be signed relatively soon, which will ultimately set in motion Daniel's 70th week.

Mark 13:33-37
Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

Source EJPress , Jerusalem Post , Jerusalem Post