The armed wing of the Hamas, the Izz a-Din al-Qassam Brigades, has threatened once again to fight against any international peacekeeping force that would be stationed in the Gaza Strip. The terrorist organization took control of Gaza two weeks ago , following weeks of clashes with Palestinian Authority President Abbas' Fatah organization. The European Union has proposed sending a multinational force to Gaza, similar to that stationed in southern Lebanon, in order to help bring about a lasting peace in the region. Israel was originally opposed to such a plan, but the situation in Gaza is now well beyond the control of both Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas. Israel now regards Gaza as an enemy state, and Abbas does not have the political or military authority to oust the Hamas leadership. Last month Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni stated that the Israeli Foreign Ministry was preparing to endorse a plan that would see international peacekeepers deployed along the Philadelphi corridor with Egypt. Solana has stated that the Egyptians will not be too happy about an international force on their border, but with the situation in Gaza so dire they may not have an alternative. The Hamas terrorist organization has stated they are opposed to the plan, and would "regard any foreign force as an occupying force".

Quote: *"Referring to Arab entities in support of the move, and especially Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, a Hamas spokesperson said: "Only those helpless ones, who take orders from external elements, support the deployment of a multinational force (in Gaza)." "They are running and crying for the help of international forces to carry out their disgraceful plan. And this is after the Palestinian people rejected the plan and threw its representatives into the dumpster of history," Hamas representatives said.*

In other news, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair has taken up his new role as Special Envoy to the Middle East this week. Initially he had announced he would be working towards the establishment of a "two-state solution" between Israel and the Palestinians, but as was reported recently there were a few who objected to his new role .

Quote: *"On the day of his appointment, he told Parliament his "absolute priority" would be to "give effect" to a "two-state solution, which means a state of Israel that is secure and confident of its security and a Palestinian state that is viable, not merely in terms of its territory, but in terms of its institutions". Then he told the Northern Echo newspaper that his "huge challenge" was to "prepare the ground for a negotiated settlement". The Bush administration quickly contradicted Mr Blair's sweeping definition of his role. Tom Casey, the State Department's deputy spokesman, made it clear that negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians will be handled by Condoleezza Rice, the US Secretary of State.*

Javier Solana, the High Representative for the European Common, Foreign and Security Policy, feared that Tony Blair might detract from his own efforts in the Middle East peace process. And it seems that Solana has got his way. Tony Blair, who as Prime Minister, had pressed for a lesser role for the European Foreign Minister in the new EU Constitution, has now had his own role in the Middle East reduced by the future EU Foreign Minister himself. This link from my friend Darrell...

Quote: *"Madrid - Middle East quartet envoy Tony Blair will not be charged with mediating in the Middle East conflict, but with channelling aid towards the construction of a Palestinian state, European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana was Friday quoted as saying. Former British Premier Blair, whose appointment has been met with scepticism in parts of the region, will not conduct a peace process, the Spanish daily El Pais quoted Solana as saying in Lisbon.*

The Bible makes it clear that it is not possible to know who the Antichrist will be until his revelation, which occurs after the Church is taken home according to 2nd Thessalonians 2:6-8. But what we can see is that the situation in the Middle East is ripening for the time when the Antichrist will come and strengthen the peace agreement between the two peoples. The question remains, are you ready for when Christ comes to take home His bride? Or like the five foolish virgins, will you find yourself locked out of heaven?

Luke 13:25
When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

Source YNet News , Telegraph , Earth Times