Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal has arrived in Moscow for talks in an attempt to urge Russia to end the international boycott against the Palestinian Authority. Mashaal has already visited Iran and Egypt, and is calling on the Quartet (EU, US, UN, Russia) to revise its three principles, and press Israel to recognize Palestine's "right to exist". Russia objected to the "wait and see" approach of the other members of the Quartet, and advocated the resumption of aid based on the Mecca agreement.

Quote: *""Our goal is to encourage the international community to start cooperation with the Palestinian government and pressurise Israel to recognise the Palestinian state's right to exist," RIA Novosti news agency quoted him [Mashaal] as saying. "We value Russia's position towards lifting the blockade from which the Palestinian people suffer. We also value Russia's special position in the issues of the Middle East settlement."*

Both French Foreign Minister Doust-Blazy and French President Jacque Chirac have welcomed the Mecca agreement, and are planning to push the EU to accept the formation of a unity government as the first step to implementing the three principles required by the Quartet, recognition of Israel's right to exist, the renunciation of terror and a promise to abide by past agreements with Israel.

Quote: *"Following a meeting Saturday with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas at Chirac's official residence, Chirac reconfirmed his support of the Feb. 8 Mecca agreement and said it represents the first step toward fulfilment of the preconditions for international backing. French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy repeated French willingness to cooperate with the new unity government and expressed his hope that it would open the way to all Palestinian organizations, Hamas included, recognizing Israel.*

But as has been said many many times before, the Mecca agreement is "full of eastern promise", but in regards to Israel contains very little substance. When it comes to Israel, Fatah and Hamas have in fact agreed to nothing, and most analysts see President Abbas as having lost to Hamas in the deal. The wonder is that Russia and France are so keen to adopt the deal. Perhaps they have too much to lose out on financially, by upsetting the Arab states who are also keen that the Western world accepts their deal.

Source Reuters , JTA