

## French potential recognition of "Palestinian State" likely to set back peace talks

Written by Anouk

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France's announcement that it will recognize a "Palestinian State" if there is no progress soon in peace talks for a two-state solution prejudices the issue and will more than likely inhibit the pace of talks, rather than facilitate peace negotiations. This will serve as a disincentive to negotiations.

The Palestinian Authority (PA) has dragged its feet for years on returning to the negotiating table. Learning that France will recognize a state if talks don't move forward is hardly incentive for PA leaders to sit down with Israel to engage in direct talks. Why would the PA talk, when it knows already that it has French recognition? It suggests a baffling example of "backwards diplomacy."

Such a unilateral recognition ignores Israel's vital, rightful and what should be mandatory role in peace negotiations aimed at a two-state solution. B'nai B'rith has long advocated bilateral peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians.

France's suggestion that it will recognize a "State of Palestine" is more than unhelpful. Instead France should urge the PA to return to the table without preconditions.

The Palestinians have repeatedly rejected talks. The PA has instead chosen to circumvent Israel, going to the United Nations and various world leaders rather than make hard decisions in bi-lateral talks. Such internationalization of the conflict with the Jewish State allows the PA to avoid talks aimed at compromise.

As a staunch advocate for Israel, B'nai B'rith will work to ensure that Israel's security is fairly considered.

*Source: B'nai B'rith International Press release. Washington, D.C., Jan. 31, 2016*

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