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September 02, 2010

Middle East News: World Press Roundup

Direct talks are launched. PM Netanyahu is taking personal charge of Israel's strategy. The NYT asks a number of experts about settlements and settlers. Hussein Ibish and Michael Weiss look at Palestinian state building. Hussein Agha and Robert Malley say asymmetries in power complicate the negotiations. Pres. Abbas says now is the time for peace. The CSM says Jerusalem is the trickiest issue. Palestinians get unlikely support from some settlers. Settlers across the West Bank begin construction in defiance of government restrictions. Hamas claims responsibility for another West Bank shooting, and the PA vows to "hit them with an iron fist." Avi Issacharoff says Abbas is a real partner in peace for Israel. Israeli officials in Jerusalem authorize headquarters for an Israeli volunteer rescue unit in a sensitive Palestinian neighborhood. 150 Israeli academics say they will boycott settlements. Abdul Rahman Al-Rashid wishes Abbas success. The National says extremists on both sides have nothing to offer.

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Netanyahu and Abbas to Begin Direct Mideast Peace Talks

Article Author(s): Helene Cooper

Media Outlet: The New York Times

Date: September 2, 2010

Source Link(s): http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/03/world/middleeast/03diplo.html?_r=3&hp [6]

The Israeli and Palestinian leaders were to open direct peace negotiations Thursday after committing to work to end the conflict that has endured for six decades.

Israeli Peace Effort Rests on Netanyahu

Article Author(s): Ethan Bronner

Media Outlet: The New York Times

Date: September 1, 2010

Source Link(s):

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/02/world/middleeast/02israel.html?ref=middleeast> [7]

David Rubinger, one of Israel's best-known photojournalists and a man firmly on the political left, cast his ballot last year for Benjamin Netanyahu for prime minister, the first time he had ever voted for the right-leaning Likud Party.

"The left wants to make peace but cannot, while the right doesn't want to but, if forced to, can do it," he said in an interview. "So last year I decided to vote not with my heart but with my head."

Negotiating With the Israeli Settlers

Article Author(s): Amjad Atallah
Michele Dunne
Yossi Klein Halevi
Rashid Khalidi
Menachem Klein
David Newman

Media Outlet: The New York Times

Article Type: Opinion

Date: September 1, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2010/09/01/negotiating-with-the-israeli-set...> [8]

David Newman

The killing of four West Bank settlers on Tuesday was the last thing that Prime Minister Netanyahu needed immediately prior to the opening of talks with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in Washington.

Netanyahu is under intense pressure from all sides. The Obama administration, supported by Israel's left wing opposition, wants him to make real concessions, including a continuation of the settlement freeze which has been in place for the past ten months and which ends on

Sept. 26.

The Future Palestinian State Takes Root

Article Author(s): Hussein Ibish
Michael Weiss

Media Outlet: The Wall Street Journal

Date: September 2, 2010

Source Link(s):

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704476104575439441883157542.html> ^[9]

Many contentious issues could bedevil the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations that began Wednesday, but on one subject both sides can largely agree: The state-building program launched last year by Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Salam Fayyad has made measurable progress. While the terrorist group Hamas rules in the Gaza Strip, Palestinians in the West Bank are trying to build the framework of a future state.

The West Bank economy grew by 8.5% last year (according to the International Monetary Fund), despite the global recession and

At Mideast peace talk, a lopsided table

Article Author(s): Hussein Agha
Robert Malley

Media Outlet: The Washington Post

Date: September 2, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/09/01/AR2010090105656....> ^[10]

Israelis and Palestinians will be sitting at the same table on Thursday, but much more separates them than the gulf between their substantive positions. Staggering asymmetries between the two sides could seriously imperil the talks.

Barack Obama seeks peace within a year

Article Author(s): Carrie Budoff Brown
Laura Rozen

Media Outlet: Politico

Date: September 1, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0910/41662.html> [11]

President Barack Obama opened the first round of direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations Wednesday in nearly two years by challenging Mideast leaders to put aside decades of antagonism and reach a peace accord within the next year.

"Do we have the wisdom and the courage to walk the path of peace?" Obama asked, standing alongside leaders of Jordan, Egypt, Israel and the Palestinians in the East Room of the White House.

The Peace Talks Resume: Prospects for Success

Article Author(s): Ghaith Al-Omari
Robert Danin
David Makovsky

Media Outlet: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy

Article Type: Interview

Date: September 1, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=3247> [12]

On August 31, 2010, Robert Danin, Ghaith al-Omari, Abdel Monem Said Aly, and David Makovsky addressed a special Policy Forum at The Washington Institute to discuss direct talks between Israelis and Palestinians. Dr. Danin, the Eni Enrico Mattei senior fellow for Middle East and Africa Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, previously directed the Jerusalem mission of Quartet envoy Tony Blair. Mr. al-Omari is advocacy director of the American Task Force on Palestine and a former foreign policy advisor to Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas. Dr.

Abbas: It is time to achieve peace

Media Outlet: Ma'an News Agency

Date: September 1, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=312575> [13]

"It is time to make peace, it is time to end the occupation that began in 1967, and for the Palestinian people to achieve their freedom, independence and justice," President Mahmoud Abbas said from the White House moments after a second shooting attack against settlers in the West Bank.

"We condemned what happened today. We do not want any drop of blood to be shed neither from Palestinians nor Israelis. We want peace between our two peoples. We want to live as partners and neighbors. Let us sign a final peace agreement and end, forever, a long era of conflict," Abbas said.

The trickiest issue in Israeli-Palestinian peace talks

Article Author(s): Christa Case Bryant

Media Outlet: The Christian Science Monitor

Date: September 1, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2010/0901/The-trickiest-issue-in-Isra...> [14]

As Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas enter direct peace talks on Thursday, an intensifying battle for Jerusalem has rendered the conflict's trickiest issue even more intractable.

A key flashpoint in this battle is Sheikh Jarrah, a predominantly Arab neighborhood revered by religious Jews. While the number of new Jewish residents remains small, Palestinians and human rights activists see their expanding presence as fulfilling a larger plan.

As Mideast talks begin, Palestinians find unlikely support from Jewish settlers

Article Author(s): Danielle Cheslow

Media Outlet: The Christian Science Monitor

Date: September 1, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2010/0901/As-Mideast-talks-begin-Pale...> [15]

As Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu traveled to Washington this week, he carried with him a mix of hopes and fears about what the renewal of Mideast talks would ? or should ? bring.

One of the more unusual proposals came from Rabbi Menachem Froman: In order to move negotiations forward in an amiable atmosphere, why not send a delegation of rabbis to the West Bank to wish Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas and the Palestinian people long life?

Settlers defy peace talks with new construction across

West Bank

Media Outlet: Haaretz

Date: September 2, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/settlers-defy-peace-talks-with-new...> [16]

Hours before peace talks were set to begin in Washington, Jewish settlers defiantly announced plans on Thursday to launch new construction in their West Bank enclaves in a test of strength with Palestinian Islamists.

Naftali Bennett, director of the settlers' Yesha council, said settlers would begin building homes and public structures in at least 80 settlements, breaking a partial government freeze on building that ends on September 26.

Hamas claims responsibility for second West Bank shooting attack in two days

Article Author(s): Anshel Pfeffer

Media Outlet: Haaretz

Date: September 2, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/hamas-claims-responsibility-for-se...> [17]

Hamas on Thursday claimed responsibility for a shooting attack in which two Israelis were wounded, one of them seriously, in the West Bank.

Wednesday's roadside attack, near the Jewish settlement of Kochav Hashachar, occurred on the eve of face-to-face peace negotiations between Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Washington.

Abbas has the will, and the way

Article Author(s): Avi Issacharoff

Media Outlet: Haaretz

Date: September 2, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/opinion/abbas-has-the-will-and-the-way-1.31...> [18]

In spite of Tuesday's terror attack and its tragic consequences, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas remains a partner for peace. Over the next few days we will, of course, hear the same old slogans bandied about: "There is no Palestinian partner," or better yet, "Yasser Arafat could have made peace but didn't want to; Abbas may or might not want to conclude a

peace with Israel, but he cannot."

ZAKA headquarters authorized in east Jerusalem

Article Author(s): Ronen Medzini

Media Outlet: Ynetnews

Date: September 1, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3947743,00.html> [19]

As leaders gather in Washington to talk peace, the Jerusalem Municipality is promoting a building plan for the east of the city. Ynet learned on Wednesday that the municipal committee for commemorating terror victims has authorized the construction of a new headquarters for ZAKA, a voluntary rescue organization, in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood.

The planned headquarters will include facilities for refrigerating and storing thousands of bodies and a museum for commemorating terror victims.

PA official vows: 'We'll hit Hamas with an iron fist'

Media Outlet: The Jerusalem Post

Date: September 2, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.jpost.com/MiddleEast/Article.aspx?id=186837> [20]

Palestinian Authority security forces have vowed to arrest Hamas members and bring order to the West Bank, according to a Thursday report by London daily Asharq Al-Awsat.

"We arrested hundreds of Hamas members, and we'll continue to do so," a high-ranking Palestinian Authority official told Asharq. "We will prevent them, however we can, from bringing anarchy to the West Bank. We will hit them with an iron fist."

Israeli academics boycott West Bank settlements

Media Outlet: BBC News

Date: August 31, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-11141774> [21]

More than 150 Israeli academics say they will no longer lecture or work in Jewish settlements in the West Bank.

In a letter, they said they supported the recent decision by a group of actors and others not to take part in cultural activity there.

The academics said that acceptance of the settlements caused "critical" damage to Israel's chances of achieving peace with the Palestinians.

The actors were criticised for refusing to perform at a new cultural centre.

Wishing President Abbas Success

Article Author(s): Abdul Rahman Al-Rashed

Media Outlet: Asharq Alawsat

Date: September 2, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.aawsat.com/english/news.asp?section=2&id=22174> [22]

During the preparations for the historic [Israeli-Palestinian] negotiations due to commence today, Israeli Rabbi Ovadia Yosef called for the damnation of Mahmoud Abbas, so as to relieve the Israelis of him. And in Gaza, a group of Hamas imams have prayed that the call of Rabbi Ovadia Yosef be answered, and that Mahmoud Abbas and his negotiating team be killed.

The quest for peace begins again

Article Author(s): Matt Bradley
Sharmila Devi
Omar Karmi

Media Outlet: The National

Date: September 2, 2010

Source Link(s):

<http://www.thenational.ae/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20100902/FOREIGN/709019853/...> [23]

Against a backdrop of almost universal pessimism about its chances of success, and threats by settlers to restart construction in the West Bank, the US president Barack Obama yesterday launched Washington's third effort in a decade to end the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

The formal resumption of direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations after a 20-month hiatus will take place today at the US state department in Washington.

Extremists on both sides have nothing to offer

Media Outlet: The National

Article Type: Editorial

Date: September 1, 2010

Source Link(s):

<http://www.thenational.ae/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20100902/OPINION/709019939/...> [24]

The stage has been set: only time will tell whether what transpires in Washington this week was meant for show or to produce something of substance. The talks between Mahmoud Abbas and Benjamin Netanyahu that begin today are the first direct negotiations in two years. There remain, however, legitimate concerns over the timing of the talks.

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- [15] <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2010/0901/As-Mideast-talks-begin-Palestinians-find-unlikely-support-from-Jewish-settlers>
- [16] <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/settlers-defy-peace-talks-with-new-construction-across-west-bank-1.311729>
- [17] <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/hamas-claims-responsibility-for-second-west-bank-shooting-attack-in-two-days-1.311694>
- [18] <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/opinion/abbas-has-the-will-and-the-way-1.311647>
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