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September 8, 2011

Middle East News: World Press Roundup

NEWS: Pres. Obama's appointee to a top State Department job tells the Senate that the US will veto a Palestinian application to the Security Council for full UN membership. Palestinians may seek Vatican-like nonmember observer state status at the UN. Palestinians say major differences with the US on a UN initiative continue. The US and Israel intensify efforts to block an initiative. A former White House scientist pleads guilty in an espionage case connected with Israel. Israel faces growing international isolation due to Palestinian diplomatic efforts. Israeli cost-of-living protesters are not sure of their next step. An Islamic Jihad leader is killed in an Israeli attack on Gaza. Tensions are running high at a Palestinian refugee camp outside Jenin. COMMENTARY: Ha'aretz says PM Netanyahu is biting the US hand that feeds him. Gideon Levy says Israeli leaders are acting like pyromaniacs setting the region on fire. Gabriel Mitchell looks at tensions between Israel and Turkey. The Gulf News says Turkey has exposed Netanyahu's 'false bravado.' George Hishmeh says the US should follow the Turkish lead in confronting Israel. Daoud Kuttab says the Palestinian leadership is standing up to US pressure. Donald McIntyre says the Palestinian leadership can't retreat from its UN initiative now. The Daily Star interviews Palestinian Social Affairs Minister Majeda al-Masri about the UN and Palestinian refugee rights. Peter Rodgers says Australia should vote yes on Palestinian statehood at the UN. Guy Goodwin-Gill reiterates his concerns about the UN initiative.

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Wendy Sherman promises U.S. veto of Palestinian statehood at U.N.

Article Author(s): Josh Rogin

Media Outlet: Foreign Policy

Date: September 7, 2011

Source Link(s):

http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/09/07/wendy_sherman_promises_us_vet... [6]

Wendy Sherman, President Barack Obama's nominee for a top State Department post, told senators on Wednesday that the U.S. will surely veto a Palestinian request for recognition of statehood if it reaches the U.N. Security Council, seemingly getting out ahead of the Obama administration on the issue.

Sherman's remarks came toward the end of her confirmation hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in an exchange with Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT), who pressed her to comment on the Palestinian Authority's plan to seek full member state status at the United Nations later this month.

Palestinians Seeking Statehood at UN May Get Same Rights as Pope

Article Author(s): Flavia Krause-Jackson

Media Outlet: Bloomberg

Date: September 8, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-09-08/palestinians-seeking-statehood-at-un-ma...> [7]

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas won't walk away from the United Nations General Assembly this month with the sought-after statehood. More likely, he'll get parity with the world's smallest state led by Pope Benedict XVI.

Support for the upgrade in Palestinian status at the UN from 'entity' to 'non-member state' is likely if the matter is brought to a vote in the 193-member assembly, where a two-thirds majority, or 129 votes, is required.

Palestinians: Differences with US on UN bid 'still wide'

Media Outlet: Ma'an News Agency

Date: September 8, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=418375> [8]

The differences with Washington over the UN bid are "still wide," a senior Palestinian official said on Wednesday after talks with US envoys in the West Bank city of Ramallah.

"The gap between the Palestinian and US positions is still wide after the meeting," presidential spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeina told AFP.

"There are efforts being made and an agreement to continue communication with the US administration and the (Middle East) Quartet envoy," he said.

US and Israel step up efforts to block Palestinian statehood bid

Article Author(s): Vita Bekker

Media Outlet: The National

Date: September 8, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.thenational.ae/news/worldwide/middle-east/us-and-israel-step-up-effor...> [9]

Israel and the US are drawing on every weapon in their diplomatic armoury to prevent Palestinians taking their statehood bid to the United Nations this month.

Their efforts to stop the Palestinians from pursuing UN recognition include dispatching a US diplomatic team to hold talks with Palestinian leaders, peppering the media with Israeli pledges of a renewal of talks and issuing warnings that UN recognition would be a blow to peace.

Nevertheless, there is a gathering sense that the Palestinian bid may go forward despite the odds it has faced from the start.

Ex-White House Scientist Pleads Guilty in Spy Case Tied to Israel

Article Author(s): Scott Shane

Media Outlet: The New York Times

Date: September 7, 2011

Source Link(s): http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/08/us/08spy.html?_r=2&ref=middleeast [10]

A former senior government scientist who held the highest security clearances pleaded guilty to espionage on Wednesday and agreed to a 13-year prison term for selling top-secret information on military satellites and other technology to an F.B.I. agent posing as an Israeli spy.

The scientist, Stewart D. Nozette, 54, who worked at the White House in 1989-90 and helped lead the search for water on the moon, was not charged with spying for Israel.

Israel faces growing isolation with key UN vote on Palestinian statehood looming

Media Outlet: The Washington Post

Date: September 7, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/israel-faces-growing-isolation-w...> [11]

Rising tensions with some of its closest and most important allies have left Israel increasingly isolated ahead of a momentous vote on Palestinian independence at the United Nations.

Troubles with Turkey, Egypt and even the U.S. are adding to Israel's headaches ahead of the vote, which is shaping up to be a global expression of discontent against the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

As Tel Aviv tent city folds, Israel activists debate next step

Article Author(s): Batsheva Sobelman

Media Outlet: The Los Angeles Times

Date: September 7, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-israel-tent-protest-20110908...> [12]

The tent camp along one of Tel Aviv's trendiest streets that symbolized a large-scale social protest movement is coming down, leaving some to wonder if it was all just a summer fling.

As more sections of the Rothschild Boulevard camp were dismantled Wednesday, protesters tried to keep spirits up, saying the tents may be folding but their efforts are not. The time has come, they said, to move to the next phase of their social justice movement.

Islamic Jihad operative killed in Gaza blast

Media Outlet: Ma'an News Agency

Date: September 7, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=418423> [13]

A member of Islamic Jihad's military wing was killed late Wednesday in an explosion west of Deir Al-Balah, medics said, in what militants described as an airstrike but Israel's army denied.

Al-Quds Brigades spokesman Abu Ahmad said an airstrike on a car west of Deir Al-Balah killed Remah Fayez Al-Husseni, 28, a member of the group from Shati refugee camp.

Abu Ahmad said Israel was trying to "incite the resistance" to respond.

But Israeli military officials denied any involvement in the militant's death.

Away from UN debate, Palestinian camp is on edge

Media Outlet: Alertnet

Date: September 7, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/feature-away-from-un-debate-palestinian-camp-...> [14]

Once again, it can be easier to find a rifle than a job in the West Bank refugee camp of Jenin.

Residents say occasional bursts of gunfire in its narrow streets are an economic indicator as telling as any. Many see the renewed disorder as a consequence of despair.

The scene of heavy fighting in 2002 during the last Intifada, or uprising, Jenin camp today challenges the picture of a West Bank prospering under the Palestinian Authority (PA), the Western-backed and internationally-funded government.

Netanyahu is biting off the U.S. hand that feeds him

Media Outlet: Haaretz

Article Type: Editorial

Date: September 8, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/opinion/netanyahu-is-biting-off-the-u-s-hand-...> [15]

Robert (Bob) Gates was one of the most experienced and sophisticated figures in the U.S. administration. Through his skills and connections he became head of the CIA, won the confidence of presidents and members of their inner circles as far back as the Carter administration and was appointed the second secretary of defense in the George W. Bush administration. Gates was the only top Bush aide who was asked, and agreed, to remain in his post in the Obama administration as a Republican among Democrats.

Israeli pyromaniacs are setting the Mideast on fire

Article Author(s): Gideon Levy

Media Outlet: Haaretz

Article Type: Editorial

Date: September 8, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/opinion/israeli-pyromaniacs-are-setting-the...> [16]

It's as if summer 2011 never happened, as if there had never been a protest here: Israel is being led with dreadful blindness by a handful of irresponsible politicians, dangerous pyromaniacs without equal, yet the public remains apathetic. The government is pregnant with danger, conducting a scandalous policy, yet there is no protest.

Breaking up is hard to do

Article Author(s): Gabriel Mitchell

Media Outlet: The Jerusalem Post

Article Type: Opinion

Date: September 8, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-EdContributors/Article.aspx?id=237097> [17]

The results of the UN Palmer Report (which summarizes the events surrounding the infamous ?Flotilla Incident? on May 31, 2010) have driven another nail into the coffin that is Turkish-Israeli relations. As a student of the history and development of modern Turkey, I was dismayed by the behavior of the Turkish government: its support of the flotilla and its repeated, cheap attempts to pressure Israel into an apology.

Turkey exposes Netanyahu's false bravado

Media Outlet: Gulf News

Article Type: Editorial

Date: September 8, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://gulfnews.com/opinions/editorials/turkey-exposes-netanyahu-s-false-bravado...> [18]

The arrogant vacuity of Benjamin Netanyahu's government in Israel is being devastatingly exposed by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's insistence that Israel should apologise, or at the very least take some responsibility, for the nine Turkish deaths and using excessive violence when Israeli forces stormed a Turkish ship trying to break the Israeli blockade of Gaza in May 2010.

Turkey leads the way

Article Author(s): George S. Hishmeh

Media Outlet: Gulf News

Article Type: Opinion

Date: September 8, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://gulfnews.com/opinions/columnists/turkey-leads-the-way-1.862805> [19]

Why does Barack Obama insist on burying his head in the sand, much like Benjamin Netanyahu, and take a back seat rather than seriously pursue, as expected, a resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, now in its 63rd year?

It seems what got the American president and the Israeli prime minister to climb walls recently was Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's diehard determination to take the conflict to the United Nations later this month.

Palestinian leadership stands up to pressure

Article Author(s): Daoud Kuttab

Media Outlet: The Jordan Times

Article Type: Opinion

Date: September 8, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=41082> [20]

The Palestinian leadership is experiencing a unique situation. Its insistence on going to the UN to seek recognition for statehood despite pressure from Israel and the US is beginning to bear fruit at the local level. Popular support for President Mahmoud Abbas is on an upwards trajectory as the majority of Palestinians are pleasantly surprised by their leader's determination.

The Palestinian leader can't retreat now

Media Outlet: The Independent

Article Type: Opinion

Date: September 8, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/donald-macintyre/donald-macint...> [21]

The little Caribbean island of Grenada has a population smaller than the central Israeli town of Rehovot. But during the visit to Israel by its foreign minister Karl Hood this week, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, President Shimon Peres, and Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman have all made time to see him. The reason isn't hard to find. Grenada has a vote

on the UN General Assembly as good as China's or the United States' and it has yet to make up its mind on how to vote when President Mahmoud Abbas takes his case for recognising Palestinian statehood to New York later this month.

Palestine statehood won't cancel right of return

Article Author(s): Annie Slemrod

Media Outlet: The Daily Star

Article Type: Opinion

Date: September 8, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Local-News/2011/Sep-08/148218-interview-palesti...> [22]

A successful statehood bid at the United Nations would not stand in the way of Lebanon's Palestinian refugees eventually exercising their right of return, Palestine's Social Affairs Minister said Wednesday.

In an interview with The Daily Star, Majeda al-Masri discussed some of the stickier aspects of the potential Palestinian state, and how it might affect the future of Lebanon's approximately 400,000 Palestinian refugees.

PM takes wrong course on Palestinian statehood

Article Author(s): Peter Rodgers

Media Outlet: The Canberra Times

Article Type: Opinion

Date: September 8, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/news/opinion/editorial/general/pm-takes-wrong-co...> [23]

Julia Gillard's apparent opposition to the looming United Nations General Assembly resolution on a Palestinian state may all but sink Australia's hopes for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council. If the resolution eventuates, and if Australia votes no, Australia's claims to be an independent player on the world stage will be a mockery. Once more, the country will have publicly bedded down with Israel and the US and a handful of the latter's irrelevant mendicants.

Palestinian Statehood and the International Law of Democracy

Article Author(s): Guy Goodwin Gill

Media Outlet: Jurist

Article Type: Opinion

Date: September 8, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://jurist.org/forum/2011/09/guy-goodwin-gill-palestine-statehood.php> [24]

In August 2011, I drafted an opinion on certain legal questions put to me regarding the issue of "popular representation," so far as they might arise in the context of the push to have the State of Palestine admitted as a member of the UN. The opinion provoked considerable comment, including by those who admitted to not having read it, but the overall result appears to have been a stimulating debate about the linkages between statehood, UN membership and representation of the people of Palestine.

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[8] <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=418375>

[9] <http://www.thenational.ae/news/worldwide/middle-east/us-and-israel-step-up-efforts-to-block-palestinian-statehood-bid>

[10] http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/08/us/08spy.html?_r=2&ref=middleeast

[11] http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/israel-faces-growing-isolation-with-key-un-vote-on-palestinian-statehood-looming/2011/09/07/gIQAAnM1v9J_story.html

[12] <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-israel-tent-protest-20110908,0,6321416.story>

[13] <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=418423>

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[21] <http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/donald-macintyre/donald-macintyre-the-palestinian-leader-cant-retreat-now-2350764.html>

[22] <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Local-News/2011/Sep-08/148218-interview-palestine-statehood-wont-cancel-right-of-return.ashx#axzz1XGiyexPm>

[23] <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/news/opinion/editorial/general/pm-takes-wrong-course-on-palestinian-statehood/2285239.aspx?storypage=0>

[24] <http://jurist.org/forum/2011/09/guy-goodwin-gill-palestine-statehood.php>