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Erekat: Meeting between Abbas, Mofaz is not a renewal of peace talks

Deutsche Presse Agentur (DPA)

June 29, 2012 - 12:00am

<http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/erekat-meeting-between-abbas-mofaz...> [1]

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RAMALLAH - A meeting between Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Shaul Mofaz scheduled for Sunday does not signal a renewal of stalled negotiations, chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat has said.

The two are to meet at Abbas' Ramallah headquarters.

On Thursday, Erekat told Voice of Palestine Radio the meeting did not mean a renewal of the stalled Palestinian-Israeli negotiations.

"I do not know what Mofaz will bring with him," he said. "But it is not going to be negotiations."

Israeli-Palestinian peace talks have faced hurdles for years, but came to a standstill in October 2010 when Israel refused to extend a 10-month freeze of settlement construction in the West Bank and East Jerusalem - a demand the Palestinians insist on for negotiations to resume.

Erekat said Mofaz had asked for the meeting before his centrist Kadima party joined Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition in May. He renewed his call when he was appointed deputy premier and Abbas agreed to a meeting.

Erekat and Mofaz were recently in Washington where they met U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, who seems to have pushed for the meeting.

The Islamist Hamas movement called on Abbas not to hold the meeting.

Spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri said in a statement that the talks with Mofaz give "the occupation

(Israel) opportunities for committing more crimes against our people."

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