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## Abbas, Fayyad at odds over finance minister's resignation

Ma'an News Agency

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<http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=571440> <sup>[1]</sup>

March 5, 2013

**Media Outlet:** Ma'an News Agency

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The opposing statements by President Mahmoud Abbas and his premier Salam Fayyad over the finance minister's resignation have stirred debates over the leaders' jurisdictions.

Nabil Qassis on Saturday announced his resignation, less than a year after he was appointed to replace Fayyad as finance minister. Abbas refused the resignation, but Fayyad told the cabinet on Sunday that he had accepted it.

Under Palestinian Basic Law, the prime minister is responsible for dismissing ministers or accepting their resignations.

Director of the legal committees of the Palestinian Legislative Council, Ahmad Abu Dayyeh, said Fayyad should still have consulted the president before accepting Qassis' resignation.

"This government was sworn in before President Abbas, and so the prime minister is supposed to consult him over appointing ministers or accepting resignations," Abu Dayyeh told Ma'an.

The president is abroad and refused Qassis' resignation on Saturday, requesting that the minister delay the decision until his return, Abu Dayyeh said.

Asked if Abbas could reappoint Qassis, Abu Dayyeh said the president and Fayyad would need to "agree on certain arrangements."

Abbas asked his aide At-Tayyib Abdul-Rahim to meet Qassis to discuss his reasons for quitting, Abu Dayyeh added.

The agreements the PA signed with trade unions were part of Qassis' motivation to resign as

he was concerned the finance ministry could not meet its obligations outlined in the deals, Abu Dayyeh said

"More than one agreement has been signed with trade unions, and these agreements include financial obligations which the budget won't afford, and that will further complicate the crisis," says Abu Dayyeh, describing the agreements as political moves.

Qassis was also embroiled in disputes with Fayyad over their respective powers and jurisdictions, the PLC legal official added.

Economic analyst Nasr Abdul-Karim agreed that Fayyad should have consulted Abbas before accepting Qassis' resignation.

"The finance minister was appointed by President Abbas, and even if Palestinian law says the prime minister is authorized to accept a minister's resignation, there should be an agreement between (them)."

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