



Dr Ghassan Khatib

*Special Envoy of
President Mahmoud Abbas*

*Director of the Palestinian
Government Media Centre*

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Palestinian Statehood, the Two-State Solution and Peace

Special Envoy of President Mahmoud Abbas to Australia Dr Ghassan Khatib, will be in Australia from 1 August to 3 August, meeting with Australian Parliamentarians, senior officials and decision makers. Dr Khatib will be discussing developments in the peace process and ongoing Palestinian efforts to broaden international recognition of the State of Palestine and achieve the Two-State solution.

Recognizing Palestine as a state on 1967 borders is an investment in peace, in which a viable independent Palestinian state will exist side by side with Israel and each within secure, recognised borders. This is the objective of the peace process.

Recognition of Palestine as a state, is consistent with the longstanding objective of two states as the core of a durable and just peace and the outcome sought by the PLO, the people of Palestine, the Palestinian Authority, the international community, the Australian government and Australian Civil Society.

The First Track of peace and achieving the Two-State solution, is resumption of credible and good faith peace negotiations based on clear terms of reference. These terms of reference are relevant UN resolutions, the Madrid terms of reference, including the land-for-peace principle, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet Roadmap.

Palestine continues to build the infrastructure and institutions of the State. As the **Second Track** action towards achieving the Two-State solution, the advances made have been recognized by international organizations, including the World Bank, IMF, the EU and UN. All of these organizations which have affirmed Palestine's readiness for independence, have also stressed that the only remaining obstacle to Palestinian statehood is the continuing Israeli occupation.

The **Third Track** towards achieving the Two-State solution is the broadening of international recognition of the State of Palestine. Supporting and complementing negotiations and state-building, statehood is fully consistent with the goal of achieving the Two-State solution.

Palestinian statehood does not de-legitimise or isolate Israel. It is not illegal and it does not violate any international agreement e.g. the negotiation of Final Status Issues or the Quartet Road Map. Self-determination is an inalienable right enshrined in the UN Charter and is non-negotiable.

The weight of international legitimacy that statehood will bring, will resolve outstanding obstacles to peace including claims of legal obstacles, and compel the resolution of the 42 year military occupation of Palestine.

Australia has a long-standing commitment to peace between Palestine and Israel through the Two-State solution. Palestinian Statehood supports the two-state solution which calls for an independent, sovereign, contiguous and viable State of Palestine, living side by side with Israel in peace and security on the basis of the pre-1967 borders as an essential requirement for peace and stability in the region.