Netanyahu: 2nd UN Resolution Possible Before Obama Leaves; Bars Media From Speech to Top Diplomats

January 3, 2017

By Herb Keinon

The Jerusalem Post

<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Benjamin-Netanyahu/Netanyahu-invites-media-to-cover-event-then-dismisses-it-in-less-than-two-minutes-477384>

There are currently efforts underway to bring another resolution on the Israeli-Palestinian issue to the UN Security Council before US President Barack Obama leaves office on January 20, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Tuesday.

The prime minister, speaking to a year-end meeting of Israel's ambassadors and chiefs of missions in Europe, said that while the planned Mideast summit in Paris on January 15 is “empty,” there “are signs that they will try to turn the decisions made there into another resolution in the Security Council, and that is already [something that is] not empty.”

And these signs, he said, “are not a few.”

“[The major effort] we are engaged in now is to prevent another UN resolution, and also to prevent a Quartet decision. We are investing a great deal of diplomatic efforts in this, and this also has to be your main efforts in the coming days,” he said. “This will not take much time, but it will occupy us in the next two weeks, and we need to succeed.”

Netanyahu has for months made clear his opposition to the Paris meeting, saying that Israel will not take part. The concern now in Jerusalem is not only that such a move will give encouragement to the Palestinians to stay away from negotiations, thinking they can get the world to impose a solution on Israel, but that the event will be used to force through resolutions and “establish facts” by the international community before President-elect Donald Trump takes office.

The prime minister made the remarks in a brief statement before holding the meeting behind closed-doors, in a move which disappointed the assembled media.

On a day like Tuesday, less than 24-hours after the police questioned Netanyahu, and with the conference fast approaching, the e-mail reporters received from the Prime Minister's Office at 2.33 p.m. was tantalizing.

“Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will address the conference of Israel ambassadors and heads of missions in Europe in the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem,” the message read. “The event is open for media coverage.”

Only part of it was, all of about 90 seconds.

With all the country's major television and radio stations on hand, along with a smattering of print journalists, for the event that was called for 8.15 p.m. – right smack in the middle of the country’s major news programs - the expectation was of a significant speech to the ambassadors that would address the diplomatic moves afoot, or the police investigation, or both.

After saying that the Paris summit is an empty gesture, but that there were signs of attempts to have what is decided there brought to the UN Security Council for another resolution before US President Barack Obama leaves office, Netanyahu asked the media to leave the hall so he could speak to the envoys in private.

Dutifully, and amid angry grumbles of wildly unmet expectations, the media filed out.

Earlier, Netanyahu had reacted publicly to his investigation by the police on Monday with a tweet saying that “long years of daily persecution against me and my family turned out yesterday to be nothing.”

There is allegedly a second, more serious case against Netanyahu, the details of which remain unknown. Channel 2 has alluded to the possibility of the more severe charge being related to an attempt to receive a bribe, though the charge is notoriously hard to prove because it means that no bribe was received.

Police will question the prime minister for a second time on Friday.