Leaked Document: U.S. Colluded With Palestinians 10 Days Before UN Settlements Vote

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United States Secretary of State John Kerry and White House National Security Adviser Susan Rice told a Palestinian delegation in Washington 10 days before the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution against Israeli settlements that the U.S. would not impose a veto on such a resolution if its wording was balanced, according to a document released by an Egyptian news site.

The State Department denied the contents of the document.

It is not possible to gauge the authenticity of the report published on the site Al-Youm Al-Sabaa. However, if it is authentic, it reinforces some of the claims that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s bureau has voiced against the White House over the past few days.

The five-page Arabic document released by the site appears to be a summary of the meeting, composed by the Palestinian delegation. If the document is authentic, it was probably leaked by officials in the Egyptian government.

The Egyptians distributed a Security Council resolution on the settlements last week, and demanded a vote within 24 hours, only to withdraw it after pressure from the prime minister’s bureau in Jerusalem and U.S. President-elect Donald Trump.

Israel’s UN ambassador, Ron Dermer, said Monday that [Israel had evidence that the Obama administration was behind the wording](http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/1.761470) of the resolution and had cooperated with the Palestinians behind Israel’s back. The document published on the Egyptian new site might be the evidence Israel has.

On December 22, the day the original Security Council vote was to have taken place, the Israeli news site Walla published a report almost identical to the one on the Egyptian news site. Walla quoted a senior Israeli official as stating that in a meeting between Kerry and a Palestinian delegation to Washington headed by Palestinian Liberation Organization Secretary General Saeb Erekat, agreement was reached on the matter of a resolution against the settlements, and that Kerry said the United States would not veto it.

According to the document, Kerry and Rice said America’s UN Ambassador Samantha Power was prepared to meet with Palestinian UN Ambassador Riyad Mansour to discuss the matter. Rice and Kerry are said to have asked Erekat and the other members of the delegation to keep the meeting top secret. Kerry and Rice said they wanted to avoid leaks of the meeting to the media because of the sensitivity of the transition to the Trump administration.

According to the document, Kerry suggested during the meeting that he would give a speech presenting principles to resolve the core issues between the Palestinians and Israel. Kerry said he would do so only if the Palestinians supported the principles he put forward. The document stated that these were the same principles Kerry had outlined in negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians and which were presented to the sides in February and March 2014. Israel agreed at the time to accept the document with objections; the Palestinians never officially responded to it.

According to the leaked document, Rice told the Palestinian delegation that the Trump administration was very dangerous for them because his positions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict differed from those of all American administrations since 1967. Rice recommended that the Palestinians take seriously what Trump’s advisers were saying about moving the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem and annexation of parts of the West Bank to Israel.

The document quotes Rice as asking Erekat what the Palestinians would do if Trump moved the embassy to Jerusalem and made it possible for Israel to annex part of the West Bank. It quotes Erekat as replying that the Palestinians would immediately join 16 UN agencies in which they were not yet members, retract the PLO’s recognition of Israel, freeze security cooperation and diplomatic and economic ties with Israel, make Israel responsible for the management of daily life in the PA, and call on all Arab countries to expel U.S. ambassadors.

State Department Deputy Spokesman Mark Toner responded to the report and denied the contents of the document. Toner said that Kerry did not discuss the American position regarding the Security Council resolution in his meeting with Erekat and the Palestinian delegation.