**PA planning 'diplomatic move' at the UN**

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By: Dalit Halevi

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Wassel Abu Yusuf, a member of the Palestine Liberation Organization's (PLO) Executive Committee, on Thursday accused Israel of conducting an "open and comprehensive war" against the Palestinians and of trying to impose facts on the ground by legitimizing the “settlements” and, with the assistance of the United States, in removing the issues of Jerusalem and the refugees from the negotiating table.

During the month of February, Abu Yusef said, an important diplomatic move is planned by the Palestinian Authority (PA). That move is expected to include an appeal to the UN Security Council to achieve international protection for the Palestinians and full membership of “the state of Palestine” at the UN, reported the Ma'an news agency.

He added that the move would take place ahead of the speech by PA chairman Mahmoud Abbas to the Security Council, which is scheduled for February 20.

Abu Yusuf stressed the importance of appealing urgently to the International Criminal Court in The Hague in order to bring the "occupation" to justice for its "crimes" against the Palestinians. He also spoke out in favor of "the escalation of the Intifada and the use of the popular resistance in all its forms."

Earlier on Thursday, the PA envoy to the UN pushed for a replacement broker for final status negotiations between the PA and Israel, suggesting that the Security Council or an expanded version of the Middle East Quartet could serve in place of the U.S.

The envoy, Riyad Mansour, said peace talks could “be in the format of the Security Council, that would be something that we will look at seriously.”

Alternatively, the PA envoy suggested a “collective process” led by the Middle East Quartet, expanded to include other nations and international bodies.

The Quartet, formed in 2002, included Russia, the U.S., the UN, and the European Union.

The PA is outraged at the U.S. following President Donald Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Following Trump's Jerusalem move, an angry Abbas declared that he would "no longer accept" any peace plan proposed by the United States.