Trump must reject Abbas claims at UN on size of Palestine

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By [David Singer](http://canadafreepress.com/members/1/DavidSinger/46)

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President Trump cannot begin to resolve the Jewish-Arab conflict unless he first rejects the claims made by Mahmoud Abbas at the United Nations in 2012 and 2013 concerning the territorial dimensions of former Palestine.

Abbas told the United Nations on [27 September 2012](http://www.timesofisrael.com/full-text-of-mahmoud-abbass-speech-to-the-un-general-assembly/):

*“The two-State solution, i.e. the State of Palestine coexisting alongside the State of Israel, represents the spirit and essence of the historic compromise embodied in the Oslo Declaration of Principles, the agreement signed 19 years ago between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Government of Israel under the auspices of the United States of America on the White House Lawn, a compromise by which the Palestinian people accepted to establish their State on only 22% of the territory of historic Palestine for the sake of making peace.”*

Abbas [repeated](http://www.timesofisrael.com/full-text-of-mahmoud-abbass-speech-to-the-un-general-assembly-2/) this claim at the United Nations on 26 September 2013:

*“However, as representatives of the Palestinian people, we have long been aware of our responsibilities towards our people and had the necessary courage to accept a two-State solution: Palestine and Israel on the borders of 4 June 1967, establishing a Palestinian State on 22% of the land of historic Palestine”*

On 11 January 2014 Abbas [stated](http://www.jpost.com/Diplomacy-and-Politics/Abbas-reaffirms-refusal-to-recognize-Israel-as-a-Jewish-state-337854):

*“Israel’s problem is that the Palestinians know more than the Israelis about history and geography, We talk about what we know,”*

Abbas was talking through his keffiyeh

Abbas’s twice-repeated claim contradicted [article 2](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/plocov.asp) of the 1968 PLO Charter – which organisation Abbas heads:

*“Palestine, with the boundaries it had during the British Mandate, is an indivisible territorial unit.”*

The boundaries of the British Mandate - created in 1922 under the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine – encompassed the territory that is today called Israel, Jordan, Judea and Samaria (West Bank) and Gaza.

Article 25 of the Mandate restricted the reconstitution of the Jewish National Home to an area extending to the Jordan River - 22% of the territory comprised in the Mandate.

The Mandate – administered by Great Britain until 1948 – saw the creation of:

* one Arab State in 78% – Jordan - in 1946
* one Jewish State in 17% - Israel - in 1948
* sovereignty remaining unallocated in the remaining 5% - Judea and Samaria (West Bank) and Gaza

Abbas’s claim at the UN in 2012 and 2013:

* is deceptive and misleading
* amounts to intellectual fraud and
* rejects international law as established by the Mandate

Trump’s acknowledgement that Jordan – not Israel - comprises 78% of historic Palestine would greatly enlarge the territorial field within which Trump could hope to resolve the long running conflict which now hinges on who should exercise sovereignty over a piece of land no larger than Delaware.

Jordan’s inclusion in any negotiations would create alternative solutions to end the conflict other than the creation of another Arab State between Israel and Jordan – a proposal first floated by the United Nations in 1947 and rejected many times since then by the Arabs.

That is a prospect that should excite Trump as he seeks to find a way to end a conflict whose solution eluded Presidents Clinton, Bush and Obama over the last 23 years.  Those Presidents had the best of intentions yet stumbled badly in failing to reach the finishing line because they shied away from insisting Jordan be a party to any negotiations with Israel.

Jordan - part of the conflict in Palestine since 1922 - must be part of any solution in 2017.

Trump – the consummate deal maker – must involve Jordan in any further negotiations to avoid following in the footsteps of his failed predecessors.

In the case of “Palestine” size can really make a big difference.