

# *Palestinian Authority to Stop Cooperating with Mideast Quartet*

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Ramallah, July 11 (RHC)-- The Palestinian Authority will stop cooperating with the so-called Quartet on the Middle East — which seeks to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict — after accusing it of bias in favor of Israel.

The London-based daily Al-Hayat cited a senior PA official as making the announcement. Mohammad Shtayyeh said Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas had taken the decision following a report issued by the Quartet, which comprises the United Nations, the United States, Russia, and the European Union.

The Quartet report referred to “Palestinian violence and incitement” as a more important catalyst to the perpetuation of the conflict than Israel’s settlement activities. Shtayyeh said the U.S. is dominating the Quartet and the recent report has American fingerprints all over it.

The remarks came as the occupied Palestinian territories continue to be the scene of heightened tensions since August 2015, when Israel imposed restrictions on the entry of Palestinian worshipers into the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in East Jerusalem in an alleged bid to change the status quo of the holy Muslim site.

Nearly 220 Palestinians have lost their lives at the hands of Israeli forces in what is regarded as the third Palestinian Intifada (uprising) since the beginning of last October.

“The UN is powerless and the EU does not speak in one voice. Russia is a friend of the Palestinians, but many times it concludes deals with the U.S. that affect the entire region,” Shtayyeh said. He further complained that “the report only discussed the goals, not the reasons. The first reason for the failure of the peace negotiations is the settlements...”

Over half a million Israelis live in more than 230 illegal settlements built since the 1967 Israeli occupation of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The settlements are considered by the international community as illegal.

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