

# *Palestine Authority Readies to Push Statehood Case*

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Ramallah, October 28 (RHC)-- The Palestinian Authority (PA) says it is set to launch a diplomatic push next month for an independent Palestinian state regardless of warnings from the United States and Israel against such a move.

Speaking to reporters in the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah, Chief PA negotiator, Saeb Erekat, dismissed efforts by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to put obstacles in the way of Palestinian statehood.

"If he believes that he can sustain the status quo and (that) we'll do that for him, forget him. This will not last beyond November... We will not take it anymore, business as usual no more," Erekat said.

And he added: "The state of Palestine has the full intention... [to] become a member of the ICC (International Criminal Court)." The top Palestinian diplomat further noted that U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry told him in Cairo this month that Washington would oppose Palestinian ambitions for statehood.

The Palestinian Authority has turned to the United Nations and other international bodies to gain international recognition for Palestine as an independent state.

In 2012, Palestine gained the status of observer state at the UN. Palestine is now determined to seek to join the ICC, through whose mechanism it would be able to sue Israel for war crimes. Washington has historically vetoed motions against Tel Aviv at the UN Security Council.

Palestinians are seeking to create an independent state on the territories of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the besieged Gaza Strip and are demanding that Israel withdraw from the occupied Palestinian lands.

Tel Aviv, however, has refused to return to the 1967 borders and is unwilling to discuss the issue of Jerusalem.

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