

Trump Admin Warns Palestinian Leadership It's Skating on Thin Ice



Washington's patience for the Palestinian Authority leadership is nearly spent.

Ever since President Donald Trump came to the White House, US-Palestinian relations have been tense, to say the least.

Trump's overt affinity for Israel, and his unwillingness to tolerate the outrageous claims and demands of Palestinian leaders is, according to most Israelis, a breath of fresh air.

Of course, the Palestinian Authority sees the situation quite differently. President Mahmoud Abbas has become so upset by the Trump Administration that he's taken to spouting personal insults against American diplomats.

Speaking to Palestinian officials in Ramallah this week, Abbas referred to US Ambassador to Israel David Friedman as a "son of a dog" for his personal views on the legitimacy of the Israeli settlement enterprise in the biblical heartland of Judea and Samaria.

A day later, White House and US State Department officials warned Abbas to curb his hostile rhetoric.

"President Abbas's comments were outrageous and unhelpful," said State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert. "We urge the Palestinian Authority to focus its efforts on improving the lives of the Palestinian people and advancing the cause of peace. The administration remains fully committed to those goals."

Trump's Middle East envoy, Jason Greenblatt, also chimed in, writing on Twitter that "the time has come for President Abbas to choose between hateful rhetoric and concrete and practical efforts to improve the quality of life of his people and lead them to peace and prosperity."

The US Congress is set to vote in the coming days on a bill that includes

significant cuts to American foreign aid to the Palestinian Authority, which Trump has indicated must be earned by good behavior and a willingness to make peace with Israel.

PHOTO: US envoy to the Middle East Jason Greenblatt meets with Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas on May 25, 2017. Photo by FLASH90

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