

# Middle East Tribune

No. 1  
January 20, 2014

## Palestinian Abbas to speak at the Israel Knesset

### Kerry: The Leaders Need to Take Bold Decision

*Washington.* The talks between the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas have reached a critical point after intensive negotiations led by US Secretary of State John Kerry which included more than ten visits to the Middle East and endless rounds of talks in Jerusalem and Ramallah. Kerry praised the willingness of both leaders to confront core issues and take bold decisions towards compromise.

### Secret Talks in Spain

Unofficial sources in Jerusalem and Ramallah said that "Oslo style" talks were being held between Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman and the Palestinian chief negotiator Saeb Erekat in Toledo, Spain. According to these sources, the Toledo talks are held under the auspices of Catherine Ashton, the European Union Foreign Affairs High Representative. The borders of Palestine, the status of Jerusalem and the Jordan valley, as well as the Israeli settlements and the Palestinian refugee problem are among the core issues considered by the parties.

### Israel to recognize independent Palestine

*Jerusalem and Ramallah* Sources revealed that Israeli Foreign Minister Liberman is considering a proposal to recognize an independent Palestine by January 15, 2015. As part of the deal, Israel will support the acceptance of Palestine to the UN and pass a bill in the Knesset, the Israeli Parliament, to secure the status of Arabs in Israel as a minority with equal rights in a Jewish state. In return, President Abbas will formally recognize Israel as a Jewish state. The sources emphasized that to legitimize the agreement, President Abbas is planned to come to Jerusalem on March 25, 2014, to meet Israeli President Shimon Peres and to make an official visit to the Knesset.

**EU officials and sources in Washington, Jerusalem and Ramallah refused to comment on the news.**

Fig. 5.4. Scenario format:  
*Middle East Tribune*, 2014