**Us Open to New Gaza Resolution If It Helps Truce**

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By Edith Lederer

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The United States is open to a new U.N. resolution on Gaza but only if it contributes to sustaining the Israeli-Palestinian cease-fire, the U.S. envoy to the United Nations said Wednesday.

Ambassador Samantha Power told reporters that a resolution must "do no harm" to the cease-fire that has been holding in recent days and Israeli-Palestinian talks that are scheduled to resume in Cairo, and should "play a positive role in supporting a durable solution."

"Nothing underscores the urgency of securing ... a negotiated two-state solution like the crisis in Gaza and the heartbreak that so many people on both sides suffered throughout that crisis," she said.

Hanan Ashrawi, a senior figure in the Palestine Liberation Organization, told a news conference here Tuesday that the Palestinians are demanding a commitment to the 1967 borders and a deadline for the end of Israel's occupation, adding when pressed that "within three years, the occupation should end."

She also criticized the failed U.S. peace initiative by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, saying it allowed Israel "to persist in policies" that she characterized as unilateral and abusive.

Power defended Kerry's mission and stressed that negotiations are the only way to achieve a two-state solution where Israel and Palestine live side by side in peace.

"We don't think there are shortcuts or unilateral measures that can be taken at the United Nations or any place else that will bring about the outcome that the Palestinian people most seek," she said.

"If you mean to secure a permanent peace, Israel has to be a part of that negotiation, just as a practical matter," Power said. "So to think that you can come to New York and secure what needs to be worked out on the ground is not realistic, and in fact, is likely to have very counterproductive effects."

A draft resolution circulated by the United States, Israel's closest ally, and obtained Wednesday by The Associated Press calls for the re-establishment of full Palestinian Authority control over Gaza, which was ruled by Hamas militants who refuse to recognize the state of Israel.

It includes a key Israeli demand, affirming that a lasting solution must ensure that Gaza is "free of any armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those under the full and legitimate control of the Palestinian Authority."

The Security Council is also considering "elements" for a resolution proposed by European nations, and a Jordanian draft resolution backed by the Palestinians and their supporters which was written before the latest cease-fire .

The European proposal goes further than the Americans, calling for the establishment of an international Monitoring and Verification Mission in Gaza to ensure that the cease-fire agreement is implemented and to investigate reported violations.

The U.S. draft asks Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to consult with both sides "on options for the establishment of a mechanism" to assist in the transfer of construction materials to rebuild Gaza and "to monitor and verify the end-use of dual-use material."