Israel Seeks to Postpone Publication of Quartet Report

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<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4819092,00.html>

Israel has launched diplomatic efforts aimed at halting the publication of a report by the Quartet (an international diplomatic body comprised of the United Nations, the European Union, the United States, and Russia. Its purpose is to oversee the Israeli-Palestinian peace process and attempt to end the conflict), which is expected to blame Israel for the current impasse in the peace process with the Palestinians.

The report is set to be published on Thursday or Friday, but diplomats in Israel estimate that it will only be published after Prime Minister Netanyahu meets with US Secretary of State John Kerry. The two are set to meet in Rome early next week.

Israeli officials say that the report is not expected to contain any major surprises but is likely to place full blame at Israel's door step for the stalled peace process. The report will also reportedly condemn Israel's construction in the settlements, settler violence, home demolitions, and other steps seen as jeopardizing the prospects of a two-state solution.

Palestinians are expected to be censured for the effect their actions have had in increasing incitement and violence.

Reports received by Israel say that back channel attempts have been made to make the report part of the UN Security Council's agenda. The government in Jerusalem is worried that the report may pave a path toward promoting the French peace initiative [(which Israel opposes)](http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4766983,00.html), and perhaps even its endorsement by the UN.

Senior Israeli ministers say that the US is playing a double game, and that it enjoys watching Israel squirm, intending on intervening at a more convenient time – specifically, after the November presidential elections are over.

The Quartet's report was written following a meeting of its foreign affairs representatives in Munich in early 2016 with the goal of analyzing the reasons for the diplomatic stagnation between Israel and the Palestinians. It aso set out to form a plan for renewing negotiations.

PM Netanyahu spoke with Russian President Vladimir Putin, urging him to intervene and "soften" the report, as well as to postpone its publication. Netanyahu will also meet European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs Federica Mogherini and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon (who will be arriving in Israel for a goodbye visit, as he is expected to leave office at the end of 2016) next week and discuss the Quartet's report with them.