

Abbas says PA must recognize Israel

By [ASSOCIATED PRESS](#)
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Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and the EU agreed Friday that the incoming Palestinian national unity government must recognize Israel's right to exist and forswear violence.

At a press conference with EU foreign affairs chief Javier Solana, Abbas sought to reassure international donors by saying, "We remain committed to the two-state solution, the recognition of Israel, renouncing violence and terror" and to adhere to existing agreements between Israel and the Palestinians.

Abbas begs Germany to support PA

Abbas was in Brussels after meeting earlier in the day with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin. He was seeking support for a resumption of direct international aid to the Palestinian government that was halted last summer after Hamas, which seeks Israel's destruction, won parliamentary elections.

Merkel, whose country now holds the rotating EU presidency, said in Berlin that the power-sharing deal between Abbas's Fatah faction and the militantly Islamic Hamas was positive because it stopped recent fighting between the two that cost some 130 lives.

"It is good that the bloodletting, especially in Gaza, has been stopped but there is a difficult stretch in front of us," Merkel said after meeting with Abbas.

In Brussels, Abbas said that "the most important thing is to give Palestinians and Israelis new hope ...that peace and stability is possible."

In a nod to key demands of the so-called Quartet of Middle East mediators, the US, the UN, Russia and the European Union, he agreed that the incoming unity government must recognize Israel's right to exist, renounce violence and accept past peace deals.

However, a Fatah-Hamas agreement negotiated in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, says the new government must "respect" previous accords and makes no reference to recognizing Israel or renouncing violence.

Solana told reporters the EU continued to insist on the Quartet demands and was awaiting the formation of a national unity government before taking any decision on resuming direct aid.