

Syria Snubs Abbas Over U.N. Report Endorsement Delay

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Syria has postponed a scheduled visit of Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas to Damascus, apparently peeved at his delay in endorsing a U.N. report criticizing Israel's conduct of its war on Gaza

Damascus had criticized the PA for agreeing to postpone debate in the U.N. Human Rights Council (HRC) on a report by the HRC Fact-Finding commission on the Gaza Strip war, chaired by renowned Judge Richard Goldstone.

A vote on a resolution would have condemned Israel's failure to co-operate with a U.N. war crimes investigation, and would have forwarded the report, which criticizes Israeli troops for "targeting and terrorizing civilians", to the U.N. Security Council.

In turn, the Security Council could refer Israel and Hamas, the Palestinian group governing Gaza which was also criticized in the report, to the International Court of Justice.

Syria finds it hard to digest the fact that the PA could call for a postponement, undermining numerous Arab, Islamic and international efforts to take action on the report and implement its recommendations.

Syria's decision to cancel the invitation to the Palestinian Authority leader came after a coalition of 16 Palestinian human rights and legal organizations held a press conference in Gaza City condemning PA and PLO leadership.

In a fallout of Abbas's decision on the U.N. resolution, the PA Minister of National Economy, Bassem Khoury resigned over its involvement in the deferral of the Goldstone report.

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