

Report: Obama's Master Plan for the Middle East

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U.S. President Barack Obama told Jordan's King Abdullah two weeks ago to meet with leading Muslim Arab countries and persuade them to accept changes in the Saudi 2002 Initiative, according to the London-based Arabic language *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* newspaper.

The report reflects the president's swift action on the Middle East since he was elected last November.

President Obama's major proposed alteration in the Saudi peace plan is for Arab countries to grant citizenship to approximately five million Arabs who are descendants of former Israelis while allowing them the right to move to a new Palestinian Authority country.

The Saudi plan calls for them to be allowed to immigrate to Israel, a suggestion that virtually every Israeli leader categorically rejects. President Obama also reportedly told the king that he wants the United Nations flag raised over holy sites in eastern Jerusalem, where the PA would have total sovereignty under the Saudi plan.

Al Quds did not specify any other "concessions" to Israel but said that Arab countries should consider "other changes," none of which were specified.

The president's master plan calls for Arab countries to set a timetable for raising the Israeli flag in their capitals, a sign of recognition of the Jewish State. Simultaneously, the PA flag would be raised in Jerusalem neighborhoods, a move that would virtually make the Fatah-led government the de facto government in a significant portion of the Jewish capital.

The Obama administration includes several prominent Jews who have eagerly backed the president's actions, most of them having experience as advisors to former President Bill Clinton during the Oslo Accord talks that led to the Second Intifada, also known as the Oslo War, in 2000.

Obama's team has moved ahead at high speed on all tracks, including proposals for direct negotiations with Syria and diplomatic initiatives towards Iran, and it has put the ball in the court of Israel and the Arabs to accept his proposals and show that they want to reach an agreement.

White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel, whose father was an underground fighter in pre-state Israel during the British Mandate, has said he is anxious to arrange an Arab-Israeli peace ceremony, as he did during the Clinton administration. It was Rahm Emanuel who staged the handshake between former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin and Yasser Arafat, then-head of the Palestine Liberation Organization that he founded as a terrorist group.

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