

**From:** Terje Rod-Larsen <[REDACTED]>  
**To:** "Jeevacation@gmail.com" <Jeevacation@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** Fw: UNSCO Daily Press Brief, Thursday, 25 August, 2011  
**Date:** Thu, 25 Aug 2011 11:40:12 +0000

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**From:** Hayat Abu Saleh <[REDACTED]>  
**To:** Hayat Abu Saleh <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thu Aug 25 03:32:22 2011  
**Subject:** UNSCO Daily Press Brief, Thursday, 25 August, 2011

**UNSCO Daily Press Brief**

**Thursday, 25 August, 2011**

**Palestinian Statehood:**

Top Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said on Wednesday that great majority of countries would back a Palestinian membership application to the UN next month. "We hope for the vote of more than 150 countries for recognition of the state of Palestine on the 1967 borders with its capital in east Jerusalem as a full member at the United Nations." (AFP)

China on Wednesday confirmed its support for the Palestinian UN statehood bid. The message of support was delivered by Chinese Middle East envoy to the peace process in a meeting with Palestinian official Tayyeb Abdul Rahim in Ramallah. (Wafa News Agency)

The Palestinian team responsible for preparing the United Nations initiative in September has been given an independent legal opinion that warns of risks involved with its plan to join the UN. An initiative to transfer the Palestinians' representation from the PLO to a state will terminate the legal status held by the PLO in the UN since 1975 that it is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, according to the document. (Maan News)

**Gaza:**

Palestinian militants fired rocket barrages that wounded an Israeli baby Wednesday, and Israel retaliated with airstrikes that killed four Gaza fighters, Gaza officials said. (AP)

Columnist Alex Fishman writes in Yedioth Ahronoth that " Hamas and Islamic Jihad can swallow a hit on the tunnels, warehouses or buildings. But hitting their command ranks requires them to respond in an attempt to deter Israel from continuing. And so, if Israel persists in its renewed policy of assassinations, we can assume that the cease-fire will not last long and that very soon we will find ourselves in a military operation."

**Israel – Egypt:**

Egyptian ambassador to the Palestinian Authority Yasser Othman said Wednesday that there is still tension in Egyptian-Israeli relations after the killing of five Egyptian soldiers last week. "We want a clear, strong apology and a pledge to not to repeat such acts in the future," he said. (Maan News)

Egyptian activists created groups on Facebook and other social networks calling for "a million-man protest"

outside the Israeli embassy in Cairo on Friday. They will call to expel the Israeli ambassador from Egypt and close Israeli embassy. (Al-Youm al-Saba'a, Egypt)

### **Syria:**

Sixteen people were shot dead by Syrian security during overnight demonstrations. The 16 death from Wednesday according to the Syrian Revolution Coordination Committees: 7 in Homs, 2 in Idlib, 2 in Deir az Zor, 3 in Latakia, and 2 in the central Maidan district of Damascus. (Al-Jazeera)

Syrian opposition figures who met in Istanbul to form a broad-based council to represent the uprising against President Bashar al-Assad said on Thursday that they needed more time to consult with activists inside Syria on its composition. A statement by the participants said the proposed council was designed to "be part of a national safety net needed to guarantee civic peace and achieve broad consensus about the process of transition". (Reuters)

Ammar Qurabi, a member of a consultative committee that emerged from an earlier opposition conference in the Turkish city of Antalya, said the group had withdrawn from the Istanbul talks because the meeting did not build on earlier efforts to unite the opposition. (Reuters)

France will not intervene in Syria without international backing, French President Nicolas Sarkozy said on Wednesday during a news conference on Libya, but he said Syrians have the right to democracy. "France will not intervene in Syria without an international mandate," Sarkozy said. (Agencies)

European Union diplomats said on Wednesday that the bloc's governments were likely to impose an embargo on imports of Syrian oil by the end of next week. (Reuters)

Local coordinating committees of Syria said that acclaimed cartoonist Ali Ferzat was kidnapped by Assad loyalists, tortured and severely beaten. "Ferzat was thrown by the side road outside Damascus international airport. He is now recovering in the hospital," an activist said. (Al-Jazeera)

Turkey's main opposition Republican People's Party will send a delegation to Syria after the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr. (Today's Zaman, Turkey)

Former American Vice President [Dick Cheney](#) says in a new memoir that he urged President [George W. Bush](#) to bomb a suspected Syrian nuclear reactor site in June 2007. "I again made the case for U.S. military action against the reactor," Cheney wrote about a meeting on the issue. "But I was a lone voice. After I finished, the president asked, 'Does anyone here agree with the vice president?' Not a single hand went up around the room." (New York Times)

### **Lebanon:**

Hezbollah has called for a second news conference this week, to be held Thursday, to discredit an indictment accusing four of its members in the 2005 assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. (Daily Star, Lebanon)

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Hayat Abu-Saleh  
Office of the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO)  
Public Information and Media Unit  
Tel: [REDACTED]  
Mobile: [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]  
[www.unsco.org](http://www.unsco.org)