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Palestinians to submit resolution for U.N. statehood bid

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Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas informed U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry by phone that he would press ahead with the initiative despite Israeli and U.S. opposition, the official Palestinian Wafa news agency reported.

Several European countries had been pushing for a less stringent timeline that might win broader support.

"Today the Arab group will meet in New York, and we will submit the original draft resolution to the Security Council hoping to conclude the vote by tomorrow or the day after," senior Palestinian official Saeb Erekat told Reuters.

Palestinian officials said the proposal calls for negotiations to be based on the territorial lines that existed before Israel captured the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip in the 1967 Middle East war.

"The draft resolution calls for the resumption of negotiations to solve all final status issues by no later than 12 months after the adoption of the resolution and ensures the end of the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 will come no later than the end of 2017," the Palestine Liberation Organisation said.

"It calls for two sovereign, democratic and secure states, Palestine and Israel."

Israel, which pulled troops and settlers out of the Gaza Strip in 2005, has said its eastern border

would be indefensible if it withdrew completely from the West Bank.

A Palestinian draft, submitted to the Security Council by Jordan on Dec. 17, had called for Jerusalem to be the shared capital of Israel and a Palestinian state.

The final proposal reverts to a harder line, saying only that East Jerusalem will be the capital of Palestine, the officials said. It also calls for an end to Israeli settlement building in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Israel has said a Security Council vote, which follows the collapse in April of U.S.-brokered talks on Palestinian statehood, would only deepen the decades-old conflict. It supports negotiations but rejects third-party timelines.

"We will continue to rebuff vigorously attempts to force terms that would jeopardize our security," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, referring to the Palestinian U.N. bid, said in public remarks to his cabinet on Sunday.

Nine Security Council votes are needed to adopt a resolution, which would then force the United States, Israel's closest ally, to decide whether to veto it.

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