

Quartet voices support for Annapolis talks

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- The diplomatic Quartet on the Middle East Tuesday welcomed the peace summit convened in Annapolis, Md., as a first step toward a two-state solution. In a statement issued in Washington, the United Nations, European Union, Russian Federation and United States "welcomed the commitment of the Israeli and Palestinian leaders to launch bilateral negotiations toward the establishment of a Palestinian State in the West Bank and Gaza and the realization of Israeli-Palestinian peace." "This reflects the results of months of work by the parties and by the Quartet, including the Quartet's engagement with members of the Arab League Follow-Up Committee to expand the circle of support for peace." The statement followed a meeting that included Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, High Representative for European Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, Portuguese Foreign Minister Luis Amado, European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner and Quartet Representative Tony Blair.

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