

Arab states say two-state plan in jeopardy

by UPI

DAMASCUS, Syria - Arab leaders threaten to derail the two-state resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict unless Israel responds positively to the initiative. Leaders plan to restate support for the initiative during an Arab League meeting next month in Syria, The New York Times reported Friday. The initiative promised Israel normalization with league members in exchange for resolving the Palestinian refugee issue and creating a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The support comes with a message to Israel "emphasizing the need to respond to the initiative," said Muhammad Sobeih, the Arab League assistant secretary-general in charge of the Palestinian issue. "They will withdraw the initiative and look for other options." Arab nations that never wholly embracing the two-state solution said their concerns were heightened when hundreds of thousands of Palestinians crashed the Gaza Strip-Egyptian border after Israel cut off supplies to Gaza to protest Hamas leadership and the constant rocket fire on Israel, the Times article said. Jordan and Egypt -- the only neighboring countries having peace treaties with Israel -- reportedly became concerned that Israel planned to force Egypt to absorb Gaza and Jordan the West Bank, the Times said. As a result, Arab leaders indicated the two-state solution no longer is viable.

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