



Abbas and Olmert will meet with Bush next week, but who else will attend is uncertain, as is the agenda.

阿巴斯和奥尔默特将于下周会见布什，但还有谁会出席以及议程是什么都不确定。

疑云笼罩的美国中东会谈

By Paul Richter

Doubts cloud U.S. talks set on Mideast

导读: 2007年11月27日, 由布什倡导的中东问题国际会议在美国马里兰州安纳波利斯举行。自2000年美国总统克林顿在戴维营主持巴以对话以来, 时隔7年, 巴以和平进程的重启, 当是此次会议最大的功绩。巴以双方承诺努力争取在2008年底达成一项广泛的和平协议。但此间达成的《共同谅解文件》并未强调以色列和未來巴勒斯坦国之间的根本性问题, 只是为未来谈判提供了一个框架安排和指导原则。亦如会前媒体诸多充满疑虑的报道, 以色列总理奥尔默特表示, 以色列并不认为中东和平谈判确定的2008年达成和平协议的目标能够完成。巴勒斯坦民族权力机构主席阿巴斯则称巴以和谈进程艰巨而复杂。11月29日, 美国向联合国安理会提交了安纳波利斯成果草案, 希望以联合国决议的方式将成果文件正式化。由于巴以反对, 美国被迫在30日撤下草案文件。

The Bush administration announced Tuesday that it would hold a stripped-down¹ international conference next week to begin negotiating the core issues that divide the Israelis and Palestinians, the first formal attempt to revive peace talks in seven years.

U.S. officials issued invitations to 49 nations and international organizations for the three-day gathering, to be attended by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. The talks are aimed at building support for the wider peace negotiations and laying the *groundwork for² a Palestinian state in the next 14 months, before President Bush leaves office.

David Welch, the assistant U.S. secretary of State for the Middle East, said the agreement by the Israeli and Palestinian leaders to enter formal talks represented a "signal moment" that transforms the outlook for the long-stagnant³ peace process.

"There is a common understanding that this is the moment in which they can change the picture⁴ and get a serious negotiation started," Welch said at the State Department. "And that is hugely important to each of them."

But the two sides are preparing to begin the process ►

布什政府周二宣布将于下周举办一个精简的国际会议, 开始就使以色列人和巴勒斯坦人产生分歧的核心议题进行谈判, 这是7年来为恢复和平谈判进行的首次正式尝试。

美国官员向49个国家和国际组织发出了邀请, 以色列总理埃胡德·奥尔默特和巴勒斯坦民族权力机构主席马哈茂德·阿巴斯将出席为期3天的会议。会议的目的是要在布什总统离任前, 为更大范围的和平谈判积聚支持并为在未来14个月内建立巴勒斯坦国打下基础。

负责中东事务的美国助理国务卿戴维·韦尔奇表示, 以巴领导人同意正式会谈标志着一个“重大的时刻”, 将改变长期停滞的和平进程的前景。

韦尔奇在美国国务院说:“大家一致认为这将会是他们改变时局、重启严肃谈判的时刻。这对他们中的任何一方都意义重大。”

然而, 准备重启进程的双方在议题 ►

without basic agreements on the subjects or *ground rules⁵ of the talks, leaving prospects uncertain for such a high-stakes⁶ diplomatic maneuver⁷. One report Tuesday by the International Crisis Group mirrored wide international concern by concluding that the talks were occurring in a “highly politicized” context, with both Israelis and Palestinians divided among themselves.

“Failure of the negotiations could discredit⁸ both leaderships, while further undermining faith in diplomacy and the two-state solution,” the think tank’s report said.

Casting⁹ the gathering in broad terms, Welch said no issue would be off-limits¹⁰ in meetings Monday and Wednesday at the White House and State Department or at the conference itself Tuesday at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md¹¹. Participants will decide how to continue talks after the Annapolis conference ends.

Bush, who first raised the possibility of a conference in July, helped clear the way for next week’s gathering by telephoning two leaders who could play the roles of spoilers¹²—King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia. Administration officials did not describe the outcome of those calls.

Tuesday’s U.S. announcement followed months of rancorous¹³ preparatory talks, and came a mere six days before the meetings. State Department officials scrambled¹⁴ Tuesday to finalize details and formally set the conference date, missing two scheduled announcement events in the process.

The invitees for the meeting include a long list of Arab countries, members of the United Nations Security Council, other world powers, and organizations such as the European Union, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund.

U.S. officials said they had not received responses from such key invitees as Saudi Arabia, but expressed confidence that the important players would attend.

“We’re hopeful and expectant that Arab countries will participate because this is a serious effort,” Welch said.

Despite the administration’s optimism, the negotiations that begin next week face formidable¹⁵ obstacles and deep

或会谈基本原则方面还缺乏基本的一致,使得这样一个大赌注的外交行动前景难以预料。国际危机小组周二发布的一项报告反映了国际社会的普遍忧虑。报告的结论是,本次会谈是在一个“高度政治化”的背景下举行的,以巴双方都处于内部分裂当中。

该智库的报告称:“会谈失败可能会损害双方领导人的声誉,同时进一步动摇对外交努力和两国方案的信心。”

在谈到会议大体安排时,韦尔奇表示,周一、周三在白宫和国务院举行的会议和周二在马里兰州安纳波利斯美国海军学院举行的会议本身,没有什么议题不可以谈。与会者将决定在安纳波利斯会议结束后如何继续和谈。

布什在7月首次提出举行会谈的可能性。他与两位可能搅局的领导人——沙特阿拉伯国王阿卜杜拉和俄罗斯总统弗拉基米尔·V.普京通了电话,为下周聚会扫清了障碍。美国政府官员没有说明通话的结果。

经过数月充满积怨的预备会谈后,美国周二作出的宣布距会议召开仅有6天。国务院官员于周二草草把细节定下来并正式确定会议日期,在此过程中遗漏了两项原定要宣布的事项。

受邀与会者包括一大批的阿拉伯国家、联合国安理会成员、其他世界大国以及像欧盟、世界银行、国际货币基金组织这样的机构。

美国官员称,还没有收到像沙特阿拉伯这样关键受邀者的回复,但表示相信重要的相关人员会出席会议。

韦尔奇说:“我们对阿拉伯国家出席会议充满希望和期待,因为这是一次重要的会议”。

尽管美国政府表示乐观,但下周开始的谈判在中东和其他地区却面临巨大障碍

1. stripped-down['stript'daʊn] a. 无装饰的,不花哨的,朴素的
2. groundwork for sth 为某事打基础的准备工作
3. long-stagnant['lɒŋ,stægnənt] a. 长期不发展的,长期停滞的
4. picture['pɪktʃə(r)] n. <口> 事态,情况
5. ground rule [通常作复数]基本原则,局面
6. high-stakes['haɪ,steɪks] a. 大赌注的
7. maneuver[mə'nu:və(r)] n. 策略,花招
8. discredit[dis'kredit] vt. 败坏...的声誉;损害,破坏
9. cast[kɑ:st] vt. 制订;安排,编排;系统阐述;分类整理

10. off-limits['ɒf'limɪts] a. <美> 禁止入内的;禁止使用的
11. Md. abbr. Maryland 马里兰州[美国州名]
12. spoiler['spɔɪlə(r)] n. <美> (竞选或竞赛等中的) 拆台者
13. rancorous['ræŋkərəs] a. 怨恨的,歹毒的;充满 或显示) 恶意的
14. scramble ['skræmbəl] vt. 乱糟糟地收起;匆促拼凑成 (up)
15. formidable['fɔ:mɪdəbl] a. 难以克服的,难对付的,强大的,艰难的

skepticism across the Mideast and elsewhere.

The prime sponsors—Bush, Abbas and Olmert—are seen as weak leaders with feeble¹⁶ domestic support. And despite consultations throughout the year, the Palestinians and Israelis have committed themselves to little more than continuing to talk about the issues.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, the chief force behind the effort, began the year hoping that Palestinians and Israelis could inject new interest into a stalled¹⁷ process by opening discussions of how an eventual Palestinian state would look.

The conference is politically important to the main participants. Progress could provide a needed foreign policy boost for the beleaguered¹⁸ Bush administration, and could strengthen Abbas in his struggle against the more militant Palestinian faction Hamas. Positive steps also *stand to¹⁹ bolster²⁰ the Arab coalition aligned²¹ against Iran.

But the negotiating teams that began trying in early October to work out a crucial “joint statement” for the peace conference failed to agree on anything after 10 sessions—neither the principles that would underpin²² the negotiations, a timetable or a mechanism for monitoring compliance with certain obligations.

After Olmert told Rice that concessions²³ for such a document could *bring down²⁴ his government, she quietly reversed²⁵ course.

“She was about to crash and hit a wall,” said David Makovsky, director of the Mideast peace program at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, adding that Rice “has learned the limits of power.”

Now, the only agreement between the two sides is to simultaneously discuss two sets of issues: the short-term questions of Israeli security and settlements, which have preoccupied their talks in recent years; and the long-range core issues of Palestinian refugees, borders and the holy city of Jerusalem that underlie the dispute.

This agenda is a slightly more ambitious version of the moribund²⁶ “road map” that the Bush administration issued in 2002.

As the administration has laid plans for the meeting, the two sides continue to disagree about the contentious²⁷ issue of the timetable. The Palestinians are pressing for an eight-month ►

和深深疑虑。

主办者布什、阿巴斯和奥尔默特都被视为是缺少国内支持的弱势领导人。尽管以巴双方今年多次磋商,但双方最多不过是承诺继续就这些议题举行会谈。

本次会谈的主要幕后推动者是国务卿康多莉扎·赖斯,她从今年初开始就希望通过巴以双方开启巴勒斯坦最终建国的可行性讨论,来为停滞的进程投入新的关注。

本次会议对主要参加者政治意义重大。会议进展将给陷入困境的布什政府提供难得的外交政策加分,将加强阿巴斯与更好战的巴派别哈马斯的对抗。积极的进展也会支持阿拉伯联盟共同对抗伊朗。

但是,10月初就开始为和平会议制订关键的“联合声明”的谈判小组在召开了10次会议后一无所获,在谈判的基本原则、时间表及义务履行的监督机制方面都没有达成任何协议。

在奥尔默特告知赖斯,为了这样的一份文件所做出的让步会使他的政府下台后,赖斯悄悄地改变了方针。

华盛顿近东政策研究所中东和平进程项目主任戴维·马科夫斯基说:“她几乎就要碰壁了。”他补充说,赖斯“懂得了权力的局限”。

现在,双方唯一的共识是同时进行两组议题的讨论:有关以色列安全和定居点的短期问题,这些问题成了近年来会谈的主要议题;以及包括巴勒斯坦难民、边界和耶路撒冷圣城等引起争端的长期核心问题。

这一议程似乎是布什政府2002年提出的、行将消亡的“路线图”计划的一个更稍具难度的翻版。

就在美国政府已为会议制定好计划时,以巴双方仍对时间表中的争议问题争论不休。巴勒斯坦人正竭力要求给谈判设定 ►



Amid President George W. Bush's embrace, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, left, and Mahmoud Abbas shook hands on Tuesday.

deadline for finishing the negotiations, to ensure that a peace deal can be finished before Bush leaves office.

The Israelis have been unwilling to commit themselves to a deadline; Olmert said recently only that the talks might conclude within Bush's term.

Planning discussions were expected to continue up until the start of the conference. *As of²⁸ Tuesday, the two sides were still far apart, and officials on both sides said it was possible that they might issue no joint statement at all.

Another source of suspense is whether the Saudi government will show support by sending its foreign minister or another high-level official. Saudi support would signal that the Arab world was behind Abbas' efforts and would *strengthen his hand²⁹ in negotiations; by showing a greater Saudi acceptance of Israel, it could also boost Olmert at home.

Though the Saudis have let it be known that they are disappointed that the Israelis have not made more concessions, U.S. officials believe they will appear at the meeting, in part so they don't risk blame if the talks fall apart.

On Tuesday, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak showed his support for the meeting as he received a visit from Olmert. But he recognized the prevailing pessimism over its prospects.

"Let's wait for the Annapolis conference and let's not say it is a failure until then," Mubarak said. "There are maybe obstacles, but we have to work towards overcoming them."

Another issue is whether the Syrian government will take part. U.S. officials, contradicting their policy of limiting contacts with Damascus, have invited the government of President Bashar Assad. Welch, in comments to reporters, promised that if Syrian officials came "we will not turn off the microphone for anyone."

Syrian officials have not made their intentions clear, but have canceled a "counter-conference" that was to be held at the same time—a move U.S. officials interpreted as a good sign.

Another key question in the minds of Arab leaders and others involved with the issue is the commitment of Bush. The president has given Rice permission to try to restart talks. But many observers believe that he has been reluctant to have

一个8个月的最后期限, 以确保在布什离任前达成一项和平协议。

以色列人一直不愿对最后期限做出承诺。奥尔默特只是最近才表示会谈可能会在布什任内结束。

有关会议计划的磋商预计将持续到会议的召开。直到周二, 双方仍有很大分歧, 双方官员表示他们可能根本不发表任何联合声明。

另一个悬念来自于沙特政府会不会派外长或其他高级官员与会以示支持。沙特的支持意味着阿拉伯世界站在阿巴斯一边, 这将增加他在谈判中的实力; 而沙特对以色列作出的更多的承认也将提升奥尔默特在国内的声望。

尽管沙特人明确表示对以色列人未做出更多的妥协感到失望, 美国官员仍相信他们会出现在会场, 部分原因是如果谈判破裂, 他们不必冒被埋怨的风险。

周二, 埃及总统胡斯尼·穆巴拉克在接待奥尔默特访问时对会议表示支持。但他也承认对会议前景存在普遍悲观情绪。

穆巴拉克说: “让我们期待着安纳波利斯会议, 让我们事先不要说它注定会失败。可能会有障碍, 但我们必须努力克服它们。”

另一个问题是叙利亚政府是否与会。与限制和大马士革接触的政策相背, 美国官员邀请了巴沙尔·阿萨德总统的政府。韦尔奇在向记者发表评论时承诺, 如果叙利亚官员来, “我们不会关闭任何人的麦克风”。

叙利亚官员尚未明确表态, 但取消了一项原计划与中东和会同时召开的“唱对台戏的会议”, 此举被美官员解读为一个好兆头。

另一个萦绕在阿拉伯领导人和其他当事人脑海中的关键问题是布什的承诺。这位总统已允许赖斯尝试重启会谈。但是许多观察家认为, 他可能一直不愿让美国扮演

16. feeble['fi:bl] a. 虚弱的; 脆弱的; 无力的

17. stall[stɔ:l] vt. 拖延; 推迟

18. beleaguered[bi'li:gə(r)d] a. 被烦扰的; 受困扰的; 被围攻的

19. stand to 很可能

20. bolster['bɔ:lsə(r)] vt. 支持; 提高

21. align[ə'lain] vt. 使结盟

22. underpin[ʌndə'pin] vt. 支持; 巩固; 证实, 确证

23. concession[kən'seʃn] n. 让步

24. bring down 打倒, 击败 政府或政客)

25. reverse[ri'vɜ:s] vt. 转变; 改变

26. moribund['mɒrɪ,bʌnd] a. 垂死的; 不进展的; 停滞不前的

27. contentious[kən'tenʃəs] a. 争论的, 有争议的, 引起争议的

28. as of ... (指起始时间或日期) 自...起

29. strengthen sb's hand 帮助某人, 支援某人; 加强某人的地位



Economist (Dec. 8, 2007) 廉价食品的终结

Rising food prices are a threat to many; they also present the world with an enormous opportunity. 食品价格的上涨对许多人来讲是个威胁，但它们对世界而言也是一个巨大的机遇。

Prospect (Dec., 2007) 认真对待体育

Sport has never been more important, but its meaning and appeal are still not taken seriously, at least in Britain. It is time for sport to enjoy the same cultural weight as the performing arts, and to be judged by the normal standards of public life. 体育从未如此重要过，但它的意义和吸引力仍未被世人认真对待，至少在英国是如此。现在该是体育和表演艺术具有同样文化影响，并接受公众生活的正常标准判定的时候了。



Time (Dec. 10, 2007) 总统竞选人

Barack Obama has promised to change politics. Has politics changed him? 巴拉克·奥巴马已承诺要改变政治。而政治是否已经改变了他？

Popular Science (Dec., 2007) 年度最佳创新产品 100 项

PopSci gives top honors to the year's 100 most amazing innovations. 《大众科学》对 2007 年度 100 项最令人惊叹的创新产品给以最高赞誉。



the United States play its traditional active role, offering proposals that can move the talks forward.

“That is the perception throughout the region,” said Daniel C. Kurtzer, who was U.S. ambassador to Israel from 2001 to 2005 and is coauthor of a book on U.S. Mideast peace efforts.

Former U.S. negotiators, including those who tried to work out a peace deal for President Clinton in 2000, said they were surprised that the administration would try to rekindle³⁰ the effort in the waning days of Bush's second term.

“After a determined effort by the Bush administration to avoid a peace process, now they're about to start one,” said Martin Indyk, a former assistant secretary of State in the Clinton administration.

But he said that even though skepticism about the prospects for success was natural, after seven “miserable years” of violence in the region, the relaunch “is worthwhile in and of itself.”

传统的主动角色和为推进会谈提供建议。

曾于 2001 年至 2005 年任美国驻以色列大使，同时也是关于美国中东和平行动一书的合作作者的丹尼尔·C. 库尔泽称：“这是该地区共同的想法。”

在 2000 年克林顿时期就曾试图达成和平协议的前美国谈判人士表示，现任政府在布什第二个任期日渐稀缺的日子里试图重新努力让他们感到惊讶。

克林顿时期的前助理国务卿马丁·安迪克说：“在布什政府决意摆脱此前的和平进程后，他们现在准备重启一个和平进程。”

但他说，尽管对会议成功的前景充满了怀疑，这是自然的事情，但在该地区经历了 7 年充满暴力的“悲惨岁月”后，重启进程“本身还是值得的”。

(高建正 译自 Los Angeles Times Nov. 21, 2007)

30. rekindle[ˌriːˈkɪndl] vt. 重新点燃；重新激起