



Meeting with Mr Mahmoud ABBAS, President of the Palestinian Authority: Preliminary statement made by M. Jacques CHIRAC, President of the Republic.

Paris, 28 April 2006

Ladies and gentlemen, I'm very pleased to greet today the President of the Palestinian Authority, President Mahmoud Abbas, and I wish him a most cordial welcome.

He embodies the legitimate aspiration of the Palestinian people for peace and a democratic State, and I reaffirm to him France's support.

With regard to the Hamas government, we invite it France and the international community invite it to support the positions taken by the international community and, in particular, by the Quartet. This is an essential and necessary precondition for establishing normal relations with this government.

With regard to the problem of aid to the Palestinian people, humanitarian and technical aid, France considers that such aid must be maintained for humane and political reasons. She will urge the international community and especially the European Union to maintain it. Of course we are going to discuss with President Mahmoud Abbas how best to do this so that the distribution of this aid is both fair and equitable. And we wish to do it in close cooperation with the President of the Palestinian Authority.

But what's essential is the re-establishment of a negotiated political process so as to permit the establishment of peace between two States living side by side, in peace and security.

Those are the main issues I shall have the privilege of discussing with President Mahmoud Abbas.