



**Preliminary statement by M. Jacques CHIRAC,
President of the Republic, before his meeting with
Mr Mahmoud ABBAS, President of the Palestinian
Authority**

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Paris, 24 February 2007

Ladies and gentlemen, I am very pleased to be having this meeting with President Mahmoud Abbas, President of the Palestinian Authority, one of an important series of meetings he has been having with the main leaders committed to working on the problems confronting Palestine.

I want to extend greetings to him, express to him my esteem and friendship, welcome the contacts he has had, and, particularly, to stress the importance of his talks with King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, who had taken the initiative of organizing a meeting which led to movement towards we all hope a national unity government.

It is now for the different players to act in such a way that the King's suggestion, to which I want to pay tribute, is actually translated into action. I remind you that the King's proposal included recognition of the PLO's commitments. This is an important point, given the international community's concerns in this sphere.

We are going to have talks. For me it's particularly important to find out exactly how President Mahmoud Abbas feels about the way the situation is developing and the possibility of genuinely embarking on the path the only one which is, in reality, sensible towards the existence of two States: Israel and Palestine, two States living side by side, in peace and security. A peace and security possibly guaranteed by the international community.

That's the purpose of the talks I'm having with President Mahmoud Abbas, whom I again very warmly welcome./.