

No Mideast Breakthrough

July 12, 2011

The  Moscow Times

WASHINGTON — Russia and its partners in the international diplomatic "Quartet" on the Middle East have failed to reach agreement on how to restart Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

Faced with the urgent task of getting the two sides back to the table before the Palestinians seek recognition of their state at the UN in September, the "Quartet" was unable after hours of talks on Monday night to produce a unified statement on how to proceed. Such a statement had been an already modest goal of the meeting.

A senior U.S. official said Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon acknowledged that there were significant gaps still impeding progress among both the mediators and the parties themselves and that "much more work" needed to be done.

(AP)

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