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New US politics are shifting the peace process

Palestinian disillusionment, internal deadlock, and dismissal of the US as mediator may bring down the Palestinian leadership

By [Zaki Shalom](#) and [Kobi Michael](#) / 7 March 2018

President of the United States Donald Trump came into office as a self-described outsider and deal-maker seeking to disrupt the status quo and challenge prevailing political norms. At least with respect to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, President Trump has stayed true to his word, as recent months have been marked by various shifts in United States attitudes in the region. For example, compared to past presidential administrations, the Trump administration seems much less committed to a two-state vision, places lesser emphasis on the importance of the peace process, and seemingly refuses to accept traditional “rules of the game,” such as considering Palestinian perspectives when making key regional decisions.

This attitude shift most clearly manifested itself on December 6, 2017, when President Trump announced his decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Vice President of the United States Mike Pence had been scheduled to visit the Middle East two weeks after this decision, and as part of this trip, he had planned to meet with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. However, following the decision and the hardline response from Palestinian leadership, the trip was postponed and a new political reality began to emerge.

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