

U.S. Support of Palestinian Security Forces and the Politics of Succession

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May 24, 2016

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Convincing Abbas to clarify succession and return the security services to nonpolitical control will require higher-level engagement from Washington and other parties.

Since the Quartet's Roadmap for peace was introduced in 2002, the United States, European Union, and other players have devoted substantial resources to building a professional Palestinian security sector. The approach envisaged in the Roadmap focused on enhancing the Palestinian Security Forces (PSF) through providing training and equipment, as well as creating a professional nonpoliticized structure under which these forces would operate. Over time, and with crucial U.S. support, the PSF has become capable of professionally performing its security functions in the West Bank. Efforts to politically insulate the PSF, however, have not fared as well.

With Palestinian leadership succession looming and no clear mechanism available to ensure a smooth transition, the combination of politics and PSF potency threatens to undo a decade-plus in international investment. If international donors do not engage Palestinian leaders to remove the ambiguities surrounding succession, the PSF might become embroiled in transition politics either because of the messy structure of the succession process or by some security chiefs' opportunism...

[Read the full article on the Hill website. \(http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/foreign-policy/280940-us-](http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/foreign-policy/280940-us-)

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