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Romney: No hope for Israeli-Palestinian peace right now

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US presidential candidate Mitt Romney recently suggested that if he wins the current race for the White House, he will significantly alter the degree and manner of America's involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

Likening the situation to the ongoing tug-of-war between China and Taiwan, Romney told a room of campaign donors in Boca Raton, Florida that the best America and the West can hope for at present is to contain the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The gathering took place behind closed doors on May 17, but an attendee filmed Romney's response to a question about the "Palestinian problem" and uploaded the footage to YouTube this week.

Romney said that when looking at the Middle East situation he is forced to consider that "the Palestinians have no interest whatsoever in establishing peace, and that [therefore] the pathway to peace is almost unthinkable to accomplish."

Romney suggested that those who argue for simply giving the Palestinian Arabs an independent state in Judea, Samaria and Gaza

are not looking at the bigger picture.

"The border between Israel and the West Bank is...right next to Tel Aviv, which is the financial capital, the industrial capital of Israel, the center of Israel," explained Romney. "[On the] other side of what would be this new Palestinian state would either be Syria at one point, or Jordan. And of course the Iranians would want to do through the West Bank exactly what they did through Lebanon, what they did near Gaza. Which is that the Iranians would want to bring missiles and armament into the West Bank and potentially threaten Israel."

Romney said the only way for Israel to feel secure in such a situation would be to police the new Palestinian state's borders and airspace, which obviously the Palestinians would not agree to.

"I look at the Palestinians not wanting to see peace anyway, for political purposes [being] committed to the destruction and elimination of Israel, and [then] these thorny issues, and I say, 'There's just no way,'" continued Romney, noting that at present it is better to simply "hope for some degree of stability [while recognizing] that this is going to remain an unsolved problem."

"We live with [a similar situation] in China and Taiwan," concluded Romney. "We have a potentially volatile situation but we sort of live with it, and we kick the ball down the field and hope that ultimately, somehow, something will happen and resolve it."

The Palestinian leadership was infuriated by Romney's remarks, calling them "absolutely unacceptable."

The Obama Administration also took a jab at Romney, with White House spokesman Jay Carney saying that the Republican's approach lacks "leadership," while failing to address the fact that, as Romney pointed out, the US has long sidestepped the China-Taiwan conflict.

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