

# Abbas Says He was Duped by US President Obama

JPost.com Staff - The Jerusalem Post, April 25th, 2011

In 'Newsweek' interview, PA president says US counterpart failed him by letting up on pressure against settlements; criticizes ME envoy Mitchell.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas expressed disappointment in his American counterpart Barack Obama in an interview with Newsweek published on Sunday, saying the US president had led him on and then let him down by failing to keep pressure on Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu for a moratorium on settlement building.

"It was Obama who suggested a full settlement freeze," Abbas said in the interview. "I said OK, I accept. We both went up the tree. After that, he came down with a ladder and he removed the ladder and said to me, jump. Three times he did it." Abbas added that in his opinion Obama was more receptive and sympathetic to the Palestinian cause prior to his becoming president.

The PA president was also critical of US special envoy to the Middle East George Mitchell who he accused of failing to deliver Palestinian positions to the Israeli side during negotiations.

"Every visit by Mitchell, we talked to him and gave him some ideas. At the end we discovered that he didn't convey any of these ideas to the Israelis. What does it mean?"

According to Newsweek, the White House called Abbas's claim that Obama had abandoned the PA president "nonsense" and denied the claims against Mitchell.

"Of course he carried both parties' ideas to each other all the time," Tommy Vietor, a spokesman for Obama's National Security Council was quoted as saying.