News
Vatican



Pope Francis and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas exchange greetings during an audience Nov. 4 at the Vatican. (CNS/Vatican Media)

by Catholic News Service

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Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas had a 50-minute private meeting with Pope Francis at the Vatican Nov. 4.

The Vatican statement did not say what the pope and the Palestinian leader spoke about, but focused on Abbas' conversation with Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, and Archbishop Paul Gallagher, Vatican foreign minister.

In those conversations, the Vatican said, "with regard to the peace process between Israelis and Palestinians, it was stressed that it is absolutely necessary to reactivate direct dialogue in order to achieve a two-state solution, also with the help of more vigorous effort on the part of the international community."

Also, "it was reiterated that Jerusalem must be recognized by all as a place of encounter and not of conflict, and that its status must preserve its identity and universal value as a holy city for all three Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam), also through a special internationally guaranteed status."

"Finally," the Vatican statement said, "attention turned to the urgency of working for peace, avoiding the use of weapons, and combating all forms of extremism and fundamentalism."

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