

Beat: Politics

## The French President Hollande interviewed at the funeral of Simon Peres

### Former Israeli President died at 93

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**USPA NEWS** - The French President Hollande and Barack Obama and a score of other head of state went to Jerusalem for the funeral ceremony of Simon Peres at the cemetery on Mount Herzl. Simon Peres, the Ninth President of Israel and Nobel Peace Prize died on Wednesday 28th September at 93 years.

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Twenty heads of state and prime ministers and dozens of dignitaries from around the world as well as many representatives of the Israeli political class came all the way, on Friday morning to the cemetery on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem, to attend the funeral of Shimon Peres. The President Francois Hollande has answered to the press on site for an interview. here is the transcript of the full interview The ninth President of the State of Israel will be buried between the prime ministers Yitzhak Rabin and Yitzhak Shamir, one of the dead Israelis in combat and victims of terrorism. The ceremony, at which the public will not have access takes place under surveillance.

JOURNALIST : Was the ceremony was at the height of Shimon Peres you have known?-----

THE PRESIDENT HOLLANDE: Yes, Shimon Peres was one of the founding fathers of Israel, and he was a man of peace. It was necessary that this ceremony bring together all those who were not only the friends of Shimon Peres friends but but also the ones who wanted peace. I think the messages were passed, with the presence also of Mahmoud Abbas, the President of the Palestinian Authority, were to say that we do not renounce the seek of a solution for peace here in the Middle East between Israelis and Palestinians. And finally Shimon Peres was a friend of France, a great friend of France. He had known France very early, when the first discussions regarding the relations between France and Israel after the Second World War.

Then there was - with François Mitterrand and then all the Presidents who have succeeded - attached to advance peace. Remember the Oslo Accords, alas! Who could not find their translation.-----

He spoke French, loved French culture, he addressed to France because he knew what role it could and can still play today for peace. That's why it was so important that I am here as President of the French Republic and that others are here that France is well represented because beyond alternations, beyond the majorities France has always been standing the constant position to seek peace in the Middle East and there has been always a friendly relationship with Shimon Peres who was a friend of France.-----

JOURNALIST : This disappearance of Shimon Peres may be an opportunity to revive a peace process which, we know, has stalled ?-----

THE PRESIDENT HOLLANDE: This is a message, a signal, also an opportunity for Mahmoud Abbas to come here in Jerusalem, which was the case, and meeting the Prime Minister Netanyahu, even briefly.

IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEIZE FOR AN IDEA OF PEACE IS NOT LOST -----

I had an exchange with the President of the Palestinian National Authority, I have also just talked now with the Israeli Prime Minister and Israeli President, because we just use this particularly moving ceremony, with the idea that peace is not lost since we are fighting for it. We must fight for peace and therefore, Shimon Peres by his own disappearance allowed that there is still an event that is at the service of peace.-----

JOURNALIST: You said "France was well represented " yourself, Mr. Ayrault, Mr Sarkozy. was this journey and in that terms, (Editor's note- as travelling together) with Mr Sarkozy, the two Presidents in the same plane, what did you talk about?

THE PRESIDENT HOLLANDE: Fortunately, in the French Republic, there are relationships that can allow us to locate all of us, at least those who wanted to be here, beyond differences and beyond the alternations,.-----

And I considered that politicians, in this case the former President of the French Republic Nicolas Sarkozy, was to take his place, since he wanted to come here for this ceremony and, particularly in the aircraft. Thank you.

JOURNALIST :Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT HOLLANDE: Thank you.

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