APPENDICES

Trump backs away from commitment to Palestinian state

United States President Donald Trump on Wednesday dropped a US commitment to a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a longstanding bedrock of Middle East policy, even as he urged Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to curb settlement construction.

In the first face-to-face meeting between the two leaders since Trump’s victory in the 2016 election, the Republican president backed away from a US embrace of the eventual creation of a Palestinian state, upending a position taken by successive administrations and the international community.

“I’m looking at two states and one state, and I like the one both parties like,” Trump told a joint news conference with Netanyahu. “I can live with either one.”

Trump vowed to work toward a peace deal between Israel and Palestinians but said it would require compromise on both sides, leaving it up to the parties themselves ultimately to reach the terms of any agreement.

But he offered no new prescription for achieving an accord that has eluded so many of his predecessors, and Palestinian anger over his abandonment of their goal of statehood could scrap any chance of coaxing them back to the negotiating table.

Dropping a bombshell on Netanyahu as they faced reporters just before sitting down for talks, Trump told him: “I’d like to see you pull back on settlements for a little bit.”

The right-wing Israeli leader, who may have expected more decidedly pro-Israel rhetoric as the two sought to get past years of feuding with Trump’s Democratic predecessor Barack Obama, appeared startled.

Netanyahu insisted that Jewish settlements were “not the core of the conflict” and made no commitment to reduce settlement building in the occupied West Bank.

Trump echoed Netanyahu’s calls for Palestinians to recognize Israel as a Jewish state – something they have refused to do – and to halt incitement against Israelis.

United nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres warned Wednesday against abandoning the idea of a two-state solution, saying there was “no alternative”.

Netanyahu committed, with conditions, to the two-state goal in speech in 2009 and has broadly reiterated the aim since. But he has also spoken of a “state
minus” option, suggesting he could offer the Palestinians deep seated autonomy and the trappings of statehood without full sovereignty.

At the news conference, he never ruled out a two-state solution, but also made it sound as if it was an almost impossible idea. He said there were preconditions for it to happen, including the Palestinians’ recognition of Israel as a Jewish state and Israel retaining security control “in the area west of the Jordan River” – which would encompass all of the West Bank.

Palestinians reacted with alarm to the possibility that Washington might ditch its support for an independent Palestinian nation.

“If the Trump administration rejects this policy it would be destroying the chances for peace and undermining American interests, standing and credibility abroad,” Hanan Ashrawi, a senior member of the Palestine Liberation Organization, said in response to the U.S. official’s remarks.

Accommodating the most extreme and irresponsible elements in Israel and in the White House is no way to make responsible foreign policy,” she said in a statement.
Oops, our bad: ‘Moonlight’ really won in major mess-up

It was one of the most awkward moments in the history of the Oscars, of television, in entertainment, heck maybe in American history.

And somehow Warren Beatty, Hollywood’s ultimate smooth leading man, was at the center of it, and the accounting firm that is responsible for the integrity of Oscar voting apologized and was vowing a full investigation.

The producers of La La Land were nearly done with their acceptance speeches for Best Picture, the Oscar broadcast’s credits sequence about to roll, when a stir of whispers began on stage. Moments later La La Land producer Jordan Horowitz returned to the microphone and said “Moonlight won Best Picture” and insisting that “this is not a joke.”

The collective jaw of the crowd at the Dolby Theatre - and of America – remained dropped long after they become convinced it was no joke, but what academy historians later called an apparently unprecedented Oscar error. The accounting firm PwC, formerly Price Water house Coopers, said early Monday that Beatty and Faye Dunaway had been given the wrong envelope.

“We sincerely apologize to Moonlight, La La Land, Warren Beatty, Faye Dunaway, and Oscar viewers for the error that was made during the award announcement for Best Picture,” a statement from the firm said. “The presenters had mistakenly been given the wrong category envelope and when discovered, was immediately corrected. We are currently investigating how this could have happened, and deeply regret that this occurred.”

The statement came several hours after the chaotic ending, which featured Beatty returning to the mic to explain that he had opened the envelope and he was confused when it read “Emma Stone, La La Land.” He had shown it to co-presenter Dunaway briefly, as though he wanted her to read it, which she did, apparently assuming the Emma Stone part was off but the “La La” part correct.

It’s one of the strangest things that’s ever happened to me,” Beatty said backstage. “Thank God there were two of us up there,” Dunaway responded.

The actress then asked Beatty, “Who else should I tell?”

“Everybody,” he said.

At that point, a security guard tried to take the real envelope and Beatty said, “Security is not getting this. I’m giving it to [Moonlight director] Barry Jenkins at a later time.” Beatty also refused to show it to anyone else.

ABC News, tweeting about the ceremony broadcast on its network, said the envelope held by Beatty read, “Actress in a leading role.” A close-up photo of Beatty onstage verified that.

PwC has counted votes and provides winner envelopes for the Oscars and has done so for more than 80 years.
When the firm’s representatives realized the mistake, they raced onstage to right it, but too late, officials told the Associated Press.

The result was a bizarre scene with the entire cast of both movies standing together on stage exchanging sympathetic awkward stares and hugs.

The crowd had to rouse itself from its stunned stupor to try to give Moonlight its just due for winning the big award. And as the credits rolled, usually bringing sweet relief after a long night, people appeared hesitant to leave in their disbelief.

“It made a very special feeling even more special, but not in the way I expected,” a bemused Jenkins, co-writer and director of Moonlight, said backstage.

“The folks at La La Land were so gracious,” he added. I can’t imagine being in their position and having to do that.”

The ceremony’s chaotic scene immediately raced to the top of all-time Oscar moments, far more stunning than the nude man who raced across the stage in 1974 as part of the “streaking” fad.