

Ireland and Sweden have “Abandoned Israel” ...

By [Noel Baker](#)

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The Government has responded to comments from the Israeli foreign minister who claimed Ireland is among the European countries to have “abandoned” Israel and drew comparisons with the fate of Czechoslovakia prior to the Second World War.

A report in the Jerusalem Post newspaper this week carried the comments from Avigdor Liberman [Pictured left. Photograph: Ronen Zvulun/Reuters], made at a meeting of Israel’s ambassadors to the EU.

Mr Liberman was quoted as saying:

“The behaviour of countries like Sweden and Ireland is the same behaviour and abandonment that existed in Europe in 1938 with the Munich Agreement, when the Europeans abandoned their biggest ally, Czechoslovakia.”

The Israeli minister said Germany was an example of a European country that understood the challenges faced by Israel and its role as “the only country that represents western values in the Middle East”.

Mr Liberman said he would not be meeting the Swedish foreign minister when she visits the country this month over that country’s approach to the recognition of Palestine.

Ireland has also taken steps to officially recognise Palestine, and the Jerusalem Post report also namechecks the Wexford Independent TD Mick Wallace, quoting some of what he said to the Dáil during a debate on the issue.

The Department of Foreign Affairs said:

“The Government has always made clear that we believe our objective of a two-state solution to the Middle East conflict is very much in the interests of the security and prosperity of both Israelis and Palestinians. This view is almost universally shared in the international community, and by very many people in Israel. We will continue to support efforts to progress the Middle East peace process, working with both sides and as active members of the EU and UN.”

Mr Wallace defended what he said in the course of the Dáil debate:

“Right now, Israel is losing the struggle for legitimacy and that’s developing into a fundamental problem for them.

“United Nations diplomacy has failed because the US can decide what’s a

legitimate or illegitimate move by the Palestinians to gain freedom, independence, and to end apartheid. We now need a different kind of diplomacy that starts with International law.”

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