

Netanyahu Government Debates Evicting United Nations from Jerusalem in Wake of Scathing UNESCO Resolution

By [RT News](#)

Global Research, May 08, 2017

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The Israeli government held a debate on Sunday, vowing to kick out UN and affiliated agencies from its longstanding offices in East Jerusalem, as proposed by a minister of culture, after UNESCO passed a strongly-worded resolution, labeling Israel “the occupying power.”

While no information on the outcome of the meeting is yet available, there is only a slight chance that such an idea could be actually translated into action with the Israeli Foreign Ministry reportedly warning of repercussions.

“The professional opinion that will be presented is that Israel is signatory to an agreement with the UN and other international conventions under which the UN headquarters is granted diplomatic immunity,” a senior Foreign ministry source said ahead of the meeting, as [cited](#) by Haaretz.

The unnamed official added that the Foreign Ministry would remind Culture and Sports Minister Miri Regev, who has been a driving force behind the initiative, and the like-minded ministerial officials, of the necessity to heed international treaties.

The adverse consequences can be avoided in only one case, he said, which, however, appears to be highly unlikely.

“The only way to expel the UN headquarters from the Armon Hanatziv neighborhood is if the UN decides to vacate it on its own accord,” the ministry was expected to warn, according to the official.

The controversial proposal from within Israel’s power circles was triggered by an Arab-sponsored resolution passed by the UN culture body, the UNESCO, last week, provoking massive backlash in Israel.



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The resolution, introduced by Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar and Sudan and passed by UNESCO on Tuesday saw 22 countries casting their votes for the motion versus 10 against. Three countries did not attend the vote while a majority, 23 representatives, declared their abstention.

The [document](#) chastised Israel for its rampant construction activity in East Jerusalem, in particular, calling out

“Israeli occupying authorities” for their failure to “cease the persistent excavations, tunneling, works and projects in East Jerusalem, particularly in the Old City of Jerusalem, which are illegal under international law.”

It went on to stress that all steps by the Israeli authorities that

“have altered or purport to alter the character and status” Jerusalem should be deemed “null and void and must be rescinded forthwith.”

The resolution and its wording immediately drew ire from the Israeli officials, with Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu [blasting](#) it as a “*delusional resolution*” and a “*harassment*” which “*has a price.*”

Following up his menacing words with a deed, Netanyahu announced that he had tasked the Foreign Ministry to cut \$1 million from the Israeli funds bound to the UN.

Israel is no stranger to such penalties in response to what it perceives as hostile actions on the part of the UN. Back in March, the Israeli government already employed a similar measure, slashing \$2 million from its annual UN contribution, citing “*hostile resolutions*” by UN’s Human Rights Council (UNHRC).

Regev then went even further, saying that there is no point of harboring a UN compound in East Jerusalem, claiming that Israeli authorities

“have been sovereign in the city for 50 years, so there is no need for UN monitors.”

“They were given use of the compound to oversee the ceasefire agreement from the Six-Day War. It’s an agreement that is no longer relevant. This saga has to end,” the minister said last week in an interview to Israel’s Channel 2, as cited by The Jerusalem Post.

Contrary to the outrage voiced by Tel Aviv, Palestine hailed the resolution. In a statement, following the vote, Palestine’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs commended the organization for not caving in to “the campaign of intimidation, political bullying, and misinformation” it said Israel was waging to undermine the discussion and deflect attention “from the real and important issues addressed in the resolution.”

The UN headquarters is in Armon Hanatzv, a neighborhood in southern East Jerusalem, hosting officers of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), those of UNESCO and the UN special coordinator for the Middle East peace process.

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