

UN Security Council Rejects Proposal for Palestinian Statehood and Full Military Withdrawal of Israeli Occupation Forces

Led by U.S. opposition, resolution put forth by Jordan fails to pass. Following vote, Palestinian Authority looks towards International Criminal Court.

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A UN Security Council meeting at the UN headquarters in New York, Dec. 22, 2014. (Photo: AP)

A proposal that called for a full military withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied West Bank and international recognition of a Palestinian state based on 1967 borders within three years was rejected by the UN Security Council Tuesday evening.

Though its failure was not wholly unexpected, the proposal, put forth by the Jordanian delegation, [failed to gain the nine affirmative votes needed](#) to pass the council. While both the U.S. and Australia voted against the measure, the eight nations who voted in favor were: Argentina, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Luxembourg, and Russia. Five nations—the U.K., Nigeria, Republic of Korea, Rwanda and Lithuania—abstained.

As [summarized](#) by *Al-Jazeera*, the Jordanian proposal called for:

- Two sovereign states living side by side; Israel and Palestine
- End of Israeli occupation and establishing the Palestinian state within a time frame of no more than three years
- East Jerusalem as the capital of the state of Palestine which will be established on 1967 borders
- Settle the refugees' question according to UN resolution 194
- End settlement activities in West Bank and East Jerusalem and to release all Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails

Riyad Mansour, Palestinian ambassador to the UN, [chastised](#) the council members for their collective failure to pass the resolution.

"The Security Council has once again failed to uphold its charter duties to address this crises and to meaningfully contribute to a lasting solution in accordance with its own resolutions," Mansour [said](#). "This year, our people under Israeli occupation endured the further theft and colonization of their land, the demolition of their homes, daily military raids, arrests and detention of thousands of civilians including children, rampant settler terrorism, constant affronts to their human dignity and repeated incursions at our holiest sites."

Meanwhile, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power [defended her nation's](#)

[position](#) by calling the proposal “deeply imbalanced” and said it did not do enough to address Israel’s ongoing “security concerns.”

As a permanent member of the Security Council the U.S. could have blocked the resolution’s passage by asserting its veto power, but reporting indicates that intense lobbying preceding the vote as the U.S. attempted to convince enough nations to abstain so that such a move would not be necessary.

As the *Guardian* [reports](#):

Palestinian officials and other observers had thought [Nigeria](#) would back a Jordanian-tabled resolution, thereby delivering a nine-vote majority on the council which would have required a US veto to be blocked. Washington had been working strenuously to avoid having to use its veto.

Until shortly before the vote on Tuesday, council diplomats had expected the resolution to get nine yes votes. But Nigeria abstained, with its ambassador, U Joy Ogwu, echoing the US position in saying that the path to peace lay “in a negotiated solution”.

One Palestinian source involved in the negotiations told the Guardian: “Even half an hour before the vote, Nigeria indicated it was committed to voting for the resolution. We knew that Rwanda, South Korea and Australia would not back it, but we believed Nigeria was on board.”

The apparent change by Nigeria, which is a rotating member of the council, came after both the Israeli prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, and the US secretary of state, John Kerry, phoned the country’s president, Goodluck Jonathan, to ask him not to support the resolution.

Though a disappointment for those who supported the Jordanian plan, not all backers of Palestinian rights believed the proposal was the right approach.

As a consistent critic of the Palestinian Authority’s position on a lasting settlement and the concept of the so-called “two-state solution,” outspoken Palestinian activist and editor of the *Electronic Intifada* Ali Abunimah is [among those](#) who have repeatedly condemned the resolution because it would codify within the United Nations the same failed mindset that has for so long blocked the full aspirations of the Palestinian people.

“This was a terrible resolution which was unanimously opposed by every major Palestinian faction, it contained so many compromises in an attempt to avoid a US veto that it was weaker than existing UN resolutions,” he [told](#) *Al-Jazeera English* following the vote.

And in a recent blog post, Abunimah [explained](#):

This resolution tries to [undo the death of the “two-state solution”], except in a more legally binding and therefore dangerous manner. It makes the claim that “a just, lasting and peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can only be achieved by peaceful means, based on an enduring commitment to mutual recognition, freedom from violence, incitement and terror, and the two-state solution.”

It insists that the entire question of Palestine be reduced to the question of the 1967 occupation and that merely ending this occupation would effectively end

all Palestinian claims.

The resolution uses vague, deceptive and in some places outright dishonest language that would enshrine in international law the “liberal” Zionist two-state solution and deal a devastating blow to Palestinian rights, particularly the right of return for refugees.

Following Tuesday’s failed effort, the Palestinian Authority immediately turned towards new avenues of seeking justice against what it calls international crimes perpetrated by Israel.

According to various sources, PA President Mahmoud Abbas may sign official documents as early as Wednesday to join the International Criminal Court, a move that would allow it to file official charges against the state of Israel for war crimes related to its occupation of the West Bank and its attack on the Gaza Strip this summer which resulted in the deaths of more than 2,000 Palestinians, a large majority of whom were children and other non-combatants.

Chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat [told reporters](#) that Palestinian officials will hold a “very serious meeting” later on Wednesday in a bid to set a date for applying for membership to the ICC and other international agencies.

“There will be no more waiting, no more hesitation, no more slowdown,” Erekat said. “We are going to meet and make decisions.”

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