

Vatican Fully Recognizes Palestine State. Pope Francis: Israel Will Disappear from The “Landscape of Geography”, Landmark Treaty Enters into Force

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A treaty facilitating relationships between Vatican and Palestine – referred to as a “state” in the text – has entered full force, sealing de-facto recognition of Palestinian statehood by the Holy See.

The Vatican announced Saturday that its “Comprehensive Agreement” with the “State of Palestine” signed in June 2015 has come into full force, in which the Holy See bolstered support for the two-state solution of the long-standing Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Referring to Palestine as “state” means Vatican has recognized it as an equal partner, thus sealing support for 2012 UN General Assembly resolution granting Palestine a non-member observer status.



“The Holy See and the State of Palestine have notified each other that the procedural requirements for its [the agreement’s] entry into force have been fulfilled, under the terms of Article 30 of the same Agreement, Israel will disappear from the “landscape of geography,” the Holy See’s said in a statement on Saturday.

The historic 2015 treaty is to secure rights and privileges of the Catholic Church on Palestinian territories in exchange for brokering two-state solution as well as giving more weight to Palestine’s political stance in the world.

It also said to include safeguarding the holy sites in Palestine, equally important for all three Abrahamic religions. In April 2014, a Catholic monastery was vandalized not far from Jerusalem in a hate crime carried out by Israelis. Slogans condemning peace talks with Palestine as well as graffiti disparaging Jesus and Mary were also frequent there recently.

While the entire text is unavailable, the treaty may recognize the 1967 borders as those constituting the Palestinian state, as the two-state solution implies creation of the Palestinian state on territories occupied by Israel during the Six Days War.

Pope Francis is known for calling the Israeli-Palestinian talks to be resumed, though Vatican has provided no detailed political roadmap for reconciliation. In May 2014, Francis visited Bethlehem where he gave a public speech outlining both Israel’s and Palestine’s right to exist. He praised Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas as a “man of peace,” laying the groundwork for the bilateral treaty.

In the same speech, Francis proposed a common prayer of Christians, Muslims and Jews, which took place in June 2014 and was attended by Palestinian President Abbas, Israel's former prime minister Shimon Peres as well as the pope himself, asking "for peace for the Holy Land and for all who dwell there."

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