

Israel rejects ‘preposterous’ UN vote, thanks nations that supported ‘the truth’

Netanyahu: Jerusalem is our capital — always was, always will be; top Arab MK: World believes the Palestinian people deserve a place in this world

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Thursday dismissed a UN vote to reject US President Donald Trump’s recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, but said Israel was heartened by the large number of countries who did not vote for the resolution and stood by “the truth.”

“Israel rejects the UN decision and, in parallel, expresses satisfaction at the large number of states that did not vote for the resolution, countries that Prime Minister Netanyahu has visited in Europe, Africa and Latin America,” a statement from Netanyahu’s office said after the vote.

“Israel is grateful to President Trump for his steadfast position on Jerusalem, and thanks the nations that voted with Israel, and with the truth.”

In an English-language video on Facebook, Netanyahu said, “Israel completely rejects this preposterous resolution. Jerusalem is our capital — always was, always will be. But I do appreciate the fact that a growing number of countries refuse to participate in this theater of the absurd.”

The United Nations General Assembly on Thursday defied the United States and overwhelmingly passed a resolution condemning the Trump administration’s recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and calling on countries not to move their diplomatic missions to the city.

A total of 128 countries voted in favor of the text, defying the threats — that were forcefully reiterated in an address before the vote by US envoy Nikki Haley — to cut aid to countries that opposed the motion.

Nine countries — the US, Israel, Togo, Micronesia, Guatemala, Nauru, Palau, Marshall Islands and Honduras — voted against the resolution.

There were 35 abstentions, including a number of countries that had been widely expected to support the move, such as Colombia, Mexico, Malawi and Rwanda. A further 21 countries did not vote at all.

In a statement, Defense Minister Avigdor Liberman reminded Israelis of the longstanding Israeli disdain for such votes.

“Let’s just remember that this is the same UN about which our first ambassador to the organization, Abba Eban, once said: ‘If Algeria introduced a resolution declaring that the earth was flat and that Israel had flattened it, it would pass by a vote of 164 to 13 with 26 abstentions,’” Liberman said.

“There is nothing new in what just happened at the UN,” he added, and praised the US as “the moral beacon shining out of the darkness.”

Minister of Strategic Affairs and Public Security Gilad Erdan also blasted the UN vote.

“The historic connection between Israel and Jerusalem is stronger than any vote by the ‘United Nations’ — nations who are united only by their fear and their refusal to recognize the simple truth that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and the Jewish people,” Erdan said in a statement after the vote.

“While the US has recognized this simple truth, the UN has chosen once again to resort to lies and to ignore the reality that has existed for 70 years. Our response to the UN campaign by Abu Mazen [PA President Mahmoud Abbas] and his supporters against the US and Israel will be to strengthen our sovereignty, security, and construction in every part of Jerusalem. The Palestinians can threaten and the UN can vote - we will continue to build and strengthen our capital Jerusalem.”

The top Arab lawmaker in the Knesset, Arab Joint List chairman MK Ayman Odeh, said the vote was a wake-up call for Israel.

“In the international arena, there still exists a large and definitive majority that believes that the Palestinian people, like all other nations, deserve a place in this world and the right to self-determination,” he said in a statement.

“This evening’s vote by the majority of the world’s nations against Trump’s announcement, in spite of the pressure and threats, flies in the face of Trump’s

and Netanyahu's diplomatic policy and is a clear statement by the international community in support of peace and the right of the Palestinians to an independent state, whose capital is East Jerusalem."

Other Israeli leaders took to social media to express their dissatisfaction with the UN, with Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein issuing a laconic tweet that reads, in full, "SHAME ON U(N)."

Labor Party leader Avi Gabbay said, "Jerusalem was our capital before the resolution and [will be] after it. I urge the UN to deal with issues it can actually influence for the better."

Source: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-rejects-un-vote-but-grateful-for-nations-who-voted-for-the-truth/>

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