Netanyahu spurns UN as ‘house of lies’ ahead of Jerusalem vote

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Calling the United Nations “the house of lies,” Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Thursday dismissed an upcoming vote at the General Assembly on the status of Jerusalem, saying the city will remain Israel’s capital regardless of what the UN says. He also reiterated his prediction that other countries will follow Washington’s lead and move their embassy to the city.

“Jerusalem is the capital of Israel, whether or not the UN recognizes it,” he said at a dedication ceremony for a new hospital in Ashdod. “It took 70 years until the United States officially recognized it, and it will take years until the UN recognizes it as well.”

Netanyahu’s comments came hours before the UN General Assembly was set to vote on a resolution that would condemn the US’s recent recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and its announcement that it will move its embassy there. Despite US President Donald Trump’s [threat to cut aid to countries that support the resolution](https://www.timesofisrael.com/trump-warns-over-un-but-he-likely-cant-stop-feeding-the-hand-that-bites/), the motion is expected to pass with a wide margin. There is no veto at the General Assembly, but votes there are non-binding.

“The State of Israel flatly rejects this vote even before it is held,” he said.

On Monday, 14 out of 15 members of the UN Security Council voted in favor of the resolution, which [failed to pass due to an American veto](https://www.timesofisrael.com/us-vetoes-security-council-bid-to-reverse-jerusalem-recognition/).

In the run-up to Thursday’s vote, Israeli diplomats stationed abroad made [strenuous efforts](https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-us-team-up-to-block-un-vote-on-jerusalem/) to get as many countries as possible to oppose or abstain on the resolution.

“Attitudes toward Israel by many countries in the world, on all continents, are changing outside the walls of the UN and in the end will percolate inside the walls of the UN building – the house of lies,” Netanyahu said.

The prime minister, who served as Israel’s ambassador to the UN from 1984 to 1988, has long argued that Israel’s diplomatic relations are flourishing due to the Jewish state’s technological and security prowess.

“Jerusalem is our capital, we will continue to build there, and embassies of countries, headed by the United States, will move to Jerusalem,” he promised. “It will happen.”

He went on to thank the US president and his envoy to the UN, Nikki Haley, for “standing up for Israel and for standing up for the truth.”

“Ultimately, the truth will prevail,” he declared, speaking in English.

On Wednesday, Trump had praised Haley for warning foreign diplomats that she will be “taking names” of countries that support the resolution criticizing America’s position on Jerusalem.

“I like the message that Nikki sent yesterday at the United Nations for all of these nations that take our money and then they vote against us at the Security Council, or they vote against us potentially at the assembly,” the president told members of his cabinet in the White House.

“They take hundreds of millions of dollars and even billions of dollars, and then they vote against us,” he said. “Well, we’re watching those votes. Let them vote against us, we’ll save a lot. We don’t care.”

As a consequence of Trump’s threat, Israeli officials estimate that over 50 of the General Assembly’s 193 members will not support the motion, by either abstaining or being absent at the time of the vote.