Abbas: Palestinians to seek full membership at United Nations

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Palestinian Authority chief Mahmoud Abbas said on Sunday that Ramallah will seek the passage this week of a United Nations resolution granting ‘Palestine’ full membership at the international body, according to the official Palestinian *Wafa* news agency.

Speaking at an Arab League summit in Cairo, Abbas emphasized that the Palestinians remain committed to confronting the ‘racist’ and ‘extremist’ Israeli government, which he claimed was ‘ targeting Al-Aqsa Mosque and all our sanctities.’

‘The battle raging over Jerusalem did not only begin on the day of its occupation in 1967, but several decades prior to that, and even before the Balfour Declaration which was issued by the colonial powers, led by Britain and America. The declaration was aimed at getting rid of the Jews in Europe and establishing the so-called Jewish national home in Palestine, to be an outpost to safeguard the interests of these colonial countries,’ said the P.A. chief.

The 1917 Balfour Declaration spelled out London’s support for the establishment of a ‘Jewish national home’ in what was then British-ruled Mandatory Palestine. Signed by then-British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour, the declaration is considered the historic precursor to Israel’s creation in 1948.

‘Supporting Jerusalem and strengthening the steadfastness of those staying there and in its environs is a religious duty and a humanitarian and national imperative,’ said Abbas.

‘Just as our people rejected the Balfour Declaration and its results, we also rejected all attempts to liquidate our cause or falsify the facts about it. We rejected [former U.S. President Donald Trump’s peace] deal of the century, and we refused— and we still refuse—to move the U.S. embassy or any other embassy to Jerusalem,’ he added.

The U.N. General Assembly in late December approved a resolution, at the behest of the P.A., calling on the International Court of Justice to ‘render urgently an advisory opinion’ on what it called Israel’s ‘prolonged occupation, settlement and annexation of Palestinian territory.’

The ICJ [announced](https://www.jns.org/icj-sets-deadline-for-submissions-on-israels-occupation-of-biblical-heartland/) on Wednesday a July 25 deadline for state bodies and organizations to submit documents pertaining to Israel’s presence in Judea and Samaria.

In response to the U.N. resolution, the Israeli Security Cabinet decided, among other [measures](https://www.jns.org/israel-revokes-palestinian-authority-fms-vip-pass/), to withhold taxes and tariffs collected on behalf of the P.A., in an amount equal to that which Ramallah paid to terrorists and their families in 2022 under its ‘pay-for-slay’ policy.

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich has since signed an [order](https://www.jns.org/smotrich-doubles-revenue-withheld-from-pa-over-pay-for-slay/) doubling that amount.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [said](https://www.jns.org/netanyahu-knesset-to-pass-law-to-revoke-citizenship-of-expel-terrorists/) on Sunday that his governing coalition will this week pass legislation in the Knesset to strip the citizenship of terrorists and expel them from the country.

The Security Cabinet would convene to prepare for a more wide-ranging operation against ‘those who carry out terrorism, and their supporters, in eastern Jerusalem and in Judea and Samaria, while avoiding—as much as possible—harm to those who are not involved,’ he added.

The comments come after a deadly [terrorist attack](https://www.jns.org/child-killed-five-others-injured-in-jerusalem-car-ramming/) in Jerusalem claimed the lives of 6-year-old Yaakov Israel Paley, his 8-year-old brother, Asher Menachem Paley, as well as 20-year-old Alter Shlomo Lederman.

Among the [measures](https://www.jns.org/israeli-cabinet-to-mull-new-counterterrorism-measures-after-deadly-jerusalem-attack/) being considered by Israel are seizing assets belonging to the families of terrorists, erecting barriers against vehicles at bus stops and additional security checkpoints between predominantly Arab and Jewish neighborhoods in the capital, and a general crackdown on online incitement.

Following Friday’s attack, National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir called for a major operation in eastern Jerusalem in the vein of the IDF’s 2002 ‘Operation Defensive Shield,’ which was launched during the Second Intifada to uproot terrorist infrastructure in Palestinian urban areas across Judea and Samaria.

However, a senior government official said that Ben-Gvir lacked the authority to approve such a decision, which would need to be made by the Security Cabinet.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken reportedly [requested](https://www.jns.org/netanyahu-rejects-biden-admin-call-to-pause-judea-and-samaria-construction/) during his visit to Israel earlier this month that Netanyahu temporarily freeze construction in Judea and Samaria and halt demolition of illegal Arab structures in those territories as well as the eastern part of Jerusalem, in a bid to de-escalate tensions amid rampant Palestinian terrorism.

Washington also requested that the P.A. fully resume security coordination with Israel and postpone any additional steps against it at U.N. institutions and other international bodies.