Draft Security Council resolution demands immediate halt to ‘settlement activities’

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<https://www.timesofisrael.com/draft-security-council-resolution-demands-immediate-halt-to-settlement-activities/>

The United Arab Emirates has drafted a UN Security Council resolution calling on Israel to immediately cease all settlement activity, and the Palestinian Mission to the UN, which lobbied for the measure, is urging members of the top panel to hold a vote as early as Monday, three UN diplomats told The Times of Israel on Wednesday.

The resolution was drafted in response to an announcement by Israel on Sunday that it would be [legalizing nine outposts](https://www.timesofisrael.com/cabinet-okays-legalization-of-9-west-bank-outposts-in-response-to-jerusalem-attacks/) and advancing plans for some 10,000 new settlement homes in the West Bank in response to a series of terror attacks in Jerusalem.

The draft resolution, obtained by The Times of Israel, demands that Israel ‘immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory.’

The resolution ‘reaffirms that the establishment by Israel of settlements in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, has no legal validity and constitutes a flagrant violation under international law.’

It condemns ‘all Israeli settlement activities and all other unilateral measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status of the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, including, inter alia, the construction and expansion of settlements, transfer of Israeli settlers, confiscation of land, demolition of homes and displacement of Palestinian civilians.’

Israel annexed East Jerusalem in 1980 and considers it part of its undivided capital. As for the West Bank, it has stopped short of formally annexing the territory but successive governments have expanded Jewish settlements beyond the Green Line and the new government headed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is [principally](https://www.timesofisrael.com/religious-zionism-coalition-deal-settlement-growth-changes-to-discrimination-laws/) supportive of the measure.

The UAE’s UN Security Council resolution — first reported by Reuters — condemns moves toward annexation by Israel, including outpost legalizations.

The resolution also ‘calls for upholding unchanged the historic status quo at the holy sites in Jerusalem.’

It also calls on both parties to ‘to observe calm and restraint, and to refrain from provocative actions, incitement, inflammatory rhetoric and hate speech.’

The resolution reaffirms members’ ‘unwavering commitment to the vision of the two-State solution where two democratic States, Israel and Palestine, live side by side in peace within secure and recognized borders.’

The US has pushed back against the Palestinian effort to bring the resolution to a vote, as it has long opposed adjudicating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at the United Nations, two UN diplomats said.

However, it is also fervently opposed to the latest Israeli announcement and has issued several statements expressing its dismay over Jerusalem’s plans.

In order to avoid having to use its veto to block the resolution, the US has encouraged the Palestinians and their allies in the council to consider drafting a more symbolic joint statement condemning the settlement announcements, the UN diplomats said.

Ramallah has rejected the proposal and is pushing for the resolution to be brought to a vote on Monday when the Security Council holds its monthly session where members are briefed on developments in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Talks on the resolution are ongoing, though, and the text could well change as well as the timing for the vote, the UN diplomats clarified.

The last time a resolution against Israel on settlements was passed by the Security Council was in December 2016. Fourteen of the body’s 15 members backed the measure while the US, under then-US president Barack Obama, decided to abstain in order to allow the resolution to pass.

A spokesman for the US Mission to the UN did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

According to the three UN diplomats, Israel is simultaneously lobbying members of the Security Council not to back the resolution, but faces an uphill battle given that its policies in the West Bank face near-unanimous opposition.

Israel’s Ambassador to the UN Gilad Erdan penned a letter to UN Security Council members on Tuesday, urging them to condemn a recent series of attacks in Jerusalem in which 11 Israelis were killed, claiming ‘they are a direct consequence’ of incitement from the Palestinian Authority and terror groups.

The letter made no mention of the steps to further entrench Israel’s presence in the West Bank that were approved by the cabinet on Sunday and framed as a response to the Palestinian attacks.