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US vetoes Palestine's request for full UN membership



UN Photo | Ambassador Robert A. Wood of the United States votes against the draft resolution on Palestine in the Security Council.

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The Security Council rejected Palestine's request for UN membership on Thursday, with the United States casting a veto.

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In a vote of 12 in favour to one against, with two abstentions, the Council did

not adopt a draft resolution that would have recommended the General Assembly to hold a vote with the broader UN membership to allow Palestine to join as a full UN Member State.

The draft resolution is among the shortest in the Council's history: "The [Security Council](#), having examined the application of the State of Palestine for admission to the United Nations ([S/2011/592](#)), recommends to the General Assembly that the State of Palestine be admitted to membership in the United Nations."

For a draft resolution to pass, the Council must have at least nine members in favour and none of its permanent members – China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States – using their veto power.

Amid the ongoing war in Gaza, Palestine had submitted a request to the Secretary-General on 2 April, asking that a 2011 request to become a UN Member State be reconsidered.

In 2011, the Security Council considered the request but was not able to find unity in sending a recommendation to the General Assembly, which according to the [UN Charter](#) must hold a vote involving its 193 Member States.

Earlier this month, the Security Council sent the latest request to its Committee on the Admission of Member States, which met on 8 and 11 April to discuss the matter.

Palestine has been a Permanent Observer at the UN since 2012, before which it was an observer in the UN General Assembly.

Read our explainer to find out more about Palestine's status at the UN [here](#).



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UN Photo/Manuel Elías | A detailed view at the start of the Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question.

US completely isolated: Russia

Russian Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia said this marked the fifth time the United States has vetoed a Council resolution since the start of the current hostilities in Gaza.

The US "once again demonstrated what they really think of the Palestinians", he said. "For Washington, they do not deserve to have their own State. They are only a barrier on the path towards realising the interests of Israel."



He said at present, an absolute majority of the global community supports Palestine's application to become a full member of the UN.

"Today's use of the veto by the US delegation is a hopeless attempt to stop the inevitable course of history. The results of the vote, where Washington was practically in complete isolation, speak for themselves," he said.

Reforms needed: US

US Deputy Permanent Representative Robert Wood said Council members have a special responsibility to ensure that their actions further the cause of international peace and security and are consistent with the requirements of the UN Charter.

He said the report of the Committee on the Admission of New Members reflected that there was not unanimity among members as to whether the applicant met the criteria for membership, in line with Article IV of the UN


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#BREAKING

United States vetoes Security Council resolution recommending observer State of Palestine be granted full United Nations membership

Result of the vote:
IN FAVOR: 12
AGAINST: 1
ABSTAIN: 2

11:18 PM · Apr 18, 2024 

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Charter.

For example, there are unresolved questions as to whether the applicant meets the criteria to be considered a State, he said.

“We have long called on the Palestinian Authority to undertake necessary reforms to help establish the attributes of readiness for statehood and note that Hamas, a terrorist organisation, is currently exerting power and influence in Gaza – an integral part of the State envisioned in this resolution,” he said.

It is for these reasons, that the US voted “no”, he explained.

Mr. Wood said the US continues to strongly support a two-State solution.

“This vote does not reflect opposition to Palestinian statehood, but instead is an acknowledgment that it will only come from direct negotiations between the parties,” he said.

China: UN membership more urgent than ever before

Chinese Ambassador Fu Cong said the decades-long dream of the Palestinian people has been quashed at a time when the admission of Palestine as a full member of the UN is more urgent than ever before.

Over the past 13 years, the situation in Palestine has changed, namely settlement expansion, so questioning Palestine's ability to govern is not acceptable, he said.

The establishment of an independent State is an inalienable right that cannot be questioned, he continued. The admission of Palestine as a full member at the UN would indeed help in negotiations with Israel on a two-State solution.

The wheels of history are rolling forward, and Palestine and Israel will one day live in peace, side by side, Mr. Fu said, pledging China's support with a view to seeing that day happen.

Palestine upholds right to self-determination

Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine, said his people's right to self-determination has never once been subject to bargaining or negotiation.

It is a natural, historic and legal right “to live in our homeland, Palestine, as an

independent State that is free and that is sovereign," he said.

"We came to the Security Council today as an important historic moment, regionally and internationally, so that we could salvage what can be saved. We place you before a historic responsibility to establish the foundations of a just and comprehensive peace in our region."

Council members were given the opportunity "to revive the hope that has been lost among our people" and to translate their commitment towards a two-State solution into firm action "that cannot be maneuvered or retracted", and the majority of Council members "have risen to the level of this historic moment, and they have stood on the side of justice and freedom and hope, in line with the ethical and humanitarian and legal principles that must govern our world and in line with simple logic."

Mr. Mansour expressed appreciation to the countries who supported Palestine's request for UN membership and to those voted in favour of the draft resolution.

"The fact that this resolution did not pass will not break our will, and it will not defeat our determination," he said.

"We will not stop in our effort. The State of Palestine is inevitable. It is real. Perhaps they see it as far away, but we see it as near, and we are the faithful."

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Explainer: What's Palestine's status at the UN?

Find out more ahead of the Security Council's meeting at 5PM New York time, when ambassadors are due to vote on Palestine's admission to the UN as a full Member State. Stay tuned to UN News for updates. [📌](#)
news.un.org/en/story/2024/...

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9:14 PM · Apr 18, 2024

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Israel: 'Your vote will make peace almost impossible'

Israeli Ambassador Gilad Erdan said the Palestine Authority is a terror-supporting entity, "paying terrorists to slaughter us", and Palestinians do not even recognise Israel as a Jewish State.

He said Hamas was not mentioned here today because the Palestinian representative here does not represent at least half the Palestinian population.

"Regardless of the Palestinians' failure to meet the necessary criteria for UN membership, most of you sadly decided to reward Palestinian terror with a Palestinian State," he said. "It's very sad because your vote will only embolden Palestinian rejectionism even more and make peace almost impossible."

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PALESTINE

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Palestine's status at the UN explained

18 April 2024 | [UN Affairs](#)

What will it take for Palestine to become a full UN Member State? As the Security Council takes up the matter while the devastating war in Gaza enters its seventh month, we looked at Palestine's current status and what it takes to become a UN Member State.



Guterres appeals for maximum restraint in the Middle East

18 April 2024 | [Peace and Security](#)

Recent escalations in the Middle East make it even more important to support efforts towards lasting peace between Israel and a fully independent, viable and sovereign Palestinian state, UN Secretary-General António Guterres told the Security Council on

Thursday.

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