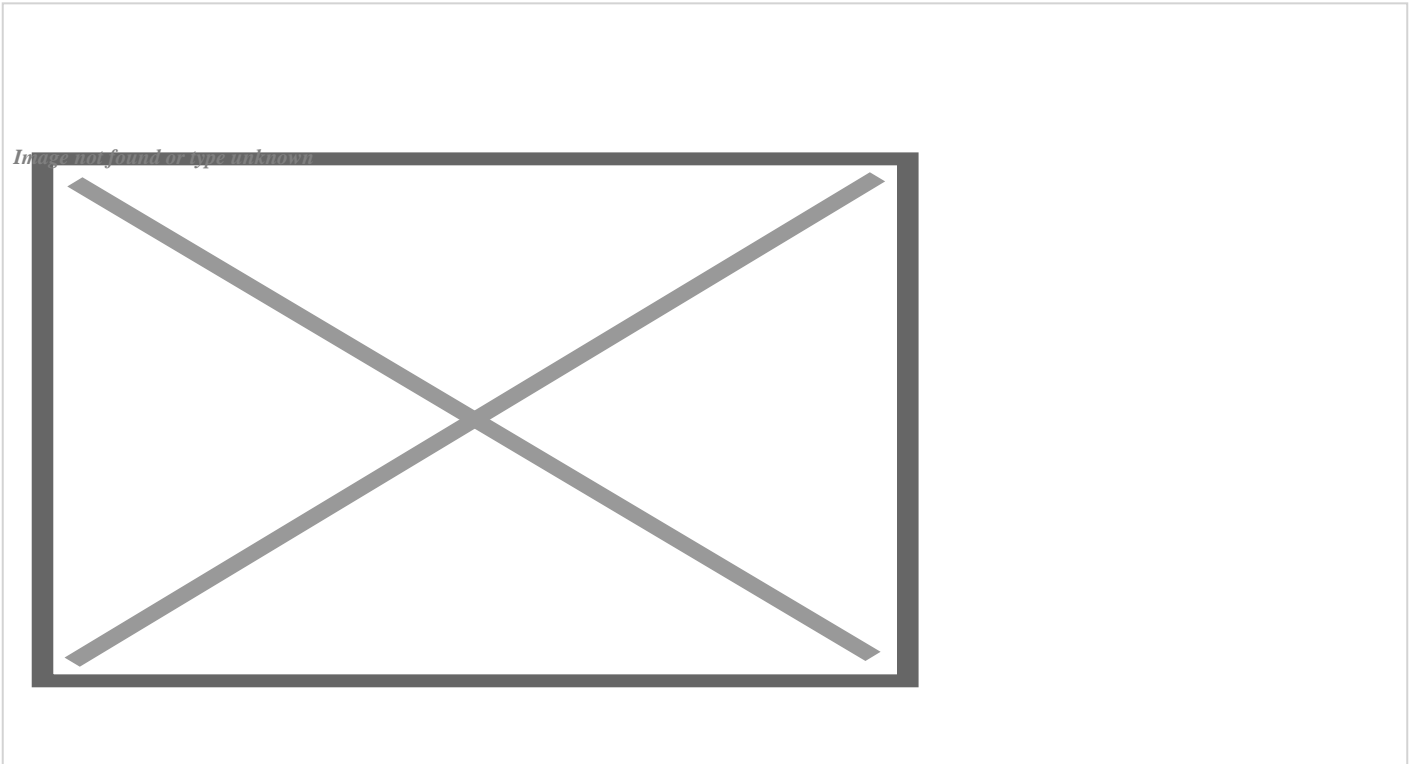


UN General Assembly to vote on recognizing Palestine as full member



United Nations, May 7 (RHC)-- The United Nations General Assembly has been scheduled to hold a vote on a draft resolution that would recognize Palestine as a full UN member.

Diplomats told media if the vote, set for Friday, goes through and gains landslide winning majority, the Assembly would recommend the UN Security Council "reconsider the matter favorably."

A condition to become a full UN member is to be approved by the 15-member UN Security Council.

Diplomats say the vast majority of the 193-member General Assembly is likely to support the Palestinian bid. However, those opposed could demand changes to the draft, raising concerns with the current text, which also grants additional rights and privileges, short of full membership, to the Palestinians.

The move towards full membership, which was put forward by the Palestinian Authority (PA) on April 18th, was vetoed in the Security Council in April by the United States, the Israeli regime's biggest ally.

Opposing diplomats to the PA's bid claim this could set a precedent for other situations, citing Kosovo and Chinese Taipei as examples of disputed territories seeking UN recognition.

The Israeli ambassador to the UN, Gilad Erdan, on Monday voiced opposition to the present draft General Assembly resolution, saying it would give the Palestinians the de facto status and rights of a state and goes against the founding UN Charter.

“If it is approved, I expect the United States to completely stop funding the UN and its institutions, in accordance with American law,” said Erdan, adding that adoption by the General Assembly would not change anything on the ground.

Meanwhile, under U.S. law, Washington cannot fund any UN organization that grants full membership to any group that does not have the “internationally recognized attributes” of statehood. The U.S. halted funding in 2011 for the UN cultural agency UNESCO after the Palestinians became a full member.

“It remains the U.S. view that the path toward statehood for the Palestinian people is through direct negotiations,” said Nate Evans, spokesperson for the U.S. mission to the UN. “We are aware of the resolution and reiterate our concerns with any effort to extend certain benefits to entities when there are unresolved questions as to whether the Palestinians currently meet the criteria under the Charter.”

Presently, Palestine is a non-member observer state, a de facto recognition of statehood that was granted to the Palestinian Authority by the UN General Assembly in 2012.

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