

# *French Lawmakers Overwhelmingly Vote to Recognize Palestinian State*

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Paris, December 2 (RHC)-- French lawmakers have voted overwhelmingly in favor of a motion to recognize Palestine as an independent state. The motion, urging the French government to recognize Palestine, was backed by a majority of 339 lawmakers while 151 members voted against.

French lawmakers had earlier called on the government to support the cause in order to reach a definitive resolution to the conflict between Israel and Palestinians.

The Israeli embassy in Paris immediately reacted to the motion, saying in a statement that "Israel believes that the vote in the National Assembly... will reduce the possibility of achieving a deal."

French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius told the parliament before the vote that the government would not be bound by the vote. He also added that Paris would recognize an independent Palestine if a final round of negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians fails to bear any results.

The last round of talks between Palestinians and the Israeli regime reached a deadlock in April, when Tel Aviv refused to free the last group of 104 Palestinian prisoners in late March as part of a deal for the

resumption of the U.S.-sponsored negotiations.

The French parliament's vote over the recognition of Palestine as a state comes after similar resolutions approved by a number of European nations over the past several months.

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