

Palestine makes history by taking seat at 79th UN General Assembly session

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Riyad Mansour, Palestinian Ambassador to the United Nations, attends the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly on September 10, 2024 (Photo by AP)

United Nations, September 12 (RHC)-- Palestine has taken a seat at the UN General Assembly at an "historic moment" for the nation, despite strong opposition by Israel to Palestinian statehood.

Palestine was seated for the first time among UN member states on September 10 during the first session of the 79th General Assembly in New York.

Permanent Observer to Palestine at the UN, Riyad Mansour, was seated for the first time at a table labeled "State of Palestine" between Sri Lanka and Sudan. The seating was approved by General Assembly President Philemon Yang.

The Palestinian Permanent Mission to the UN shared a clip on social media of the Ambassador of Egypt and the President of the General Assembly confirming the new seating arrangement for the State of Palestine delegation.

"This is not merely a procedural matter. This is an historic moment for us," said Egyptian Ambassador to the UN Osama Mahmoud Abdelkhalek Mahmoud.

In May, the UN General Assembly voted overwhelmingly in favor of reconsidering Palestine's full membership. The resolution also granted Palestine with additional participation rights. Palestine is now recognized by 145 of 193 UN member states.

While Palestine is not a full member of the assembly, it is seeking full UN membership.

Full membership would not only need a vote by the General Assembly but would also require a Security Council recommendation. The United States vetoed a Security Council recommendation on the matter on April 18th.

The resolution -- back then put forth by Algeria -- was widely supported, with 12 member states voting in favor of the resolution, including Japan, France, South Korea, Slovenia, Russia, and China. Switzerland and Britain abstained.

Several countries, including Spain, Norway, and Ireland, recognized Palestine as a state in late May amid mounting criticism of Israel's genocidal campaign in the besieged Gaza Strip.

To be a full member, Palestine would need a vote by the General Assembly and require a Security Council recommendation. The General Assembly is likely to vote on a Palestinian draft resolution next week demanding Israel end its "unlawful presence" in the Palestinian territory within six months.

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