

January 10, 111 Monday 13 Shevat 3871 4:13 IST  Print  Back to original article

# THE JERUSALEM POST

Israel's best-selling English daily and most-read English website



Photo by: AP

## More nations will recognize Palestinian state, PA says

By TOVAH LAZAROFF, KHALED ABU TOAMEH AND GIL SHELF  
08/01/2011

After Chile's recognition, Jerusalem worried other Latin American countries will follow suit; statement doesn't mention pre-'67 borders

Israel fears that most, if not all, Latin American countries will have recognized a Palestinian state by mid-February.

On Friday, Chile became the fifth Latin American country in the last month to recognize a Palestinian state. It followed recognition of Palestinian statehood by Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia and Ecuador.

### **RELATED:**

[South American countries recognize Palestinian state](#)

[Latin America: Southern discomfort](#)

Uruguay was expected to make a similar declaration in the coming weeks. One Israeli official said he feared that the trend of such recognitions would now seem "irresistible" to other Latin American countries.

"We expect that all the [Latin American] countries who have already recognized a PA state to put pressure on those who have not done so," the official said.

He added he believed that most, if not all, Latin American countries would recognize a Palestinian state by the time the a summit of Latin American and Arab countries was held in mid-February in Peru.

About 100 other countries world wide have recognized Palestinian statehood — most after Palestinians declared "independence" in 1988, and a few others, mostly former Soviet republics, did so after the 1993 Oslo peace accords. In recent years, Venezuela (2005) and Costa Rica (2008) also provided recognition.

According to the Foreign Ministry, Cuba and Nicaragua also gave past recognition to a Palestinian state.

Palestinians in the last month have preferred to push for unilateral recognition of their state rather than engage in direct negotiations with Israel for a two-state solution.

Fledgling talks between Israel and the Palestinians were held in September, but broke down when Israel did not renew its 10-month moratorium on new settlement construction.

Chilean Foreign Minister Alfredo Moreno said his country is following UN

resolutions with its decision to recognize the existence of the state of Palestine as "a free, independent and sovereign state, coexisting in peace with the State of Israel."

Chile's decision follows a meeting in Brazil between Chilean President Sebastian Pinera and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, who has been lobbying his Latin American counterparts to show their support.

Chile, whose Palestinian population of about 400,000 is among the largest outside the Arab world, also had been lobbied intensely by Israeli representatives.

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu called the Chilean president a number of weeks ago and asked him not to take such a stand.

The Prime Minister's Office and the Foreign Ministry did not issue a response. But Israeli officials warned that such declarations were harmful to the peace process because it reinforces the Palestinian belief that they do not need to negotiate.

Netanyahu has continually called to the Palestinians to enter direct negotiations. The Palestinians in turn have refused to do so unless Israel halts all settlement activity.

Palestinian Authority Foreign Minister Riad Malki recently told The Associated Press that his government's aim was to persuade more countries to endorse the 1967 boundaries.

"We are making efforts so that the rest of the countries will first recognize a Palestinian state in the '67 borders and secondly raise the level of Palestinian diplomatic representation to that of an embassy," he told the AP.

But Chile's move on Friday said only that it supported a Palestinian state, but did follow that statement with a show of support for the pre-1967 boundary.

Chile added that it "has completely supported the right of the state of Israel to exist within secure and internationally recognized frontiers."

Recognizing pre-1967 borders for a Palestinian state could undermine Chile's own position in a dispute over its maritime border with Peru, now before the International Court of Justice in the Hague. Chile maintains that the border was established by treaty after an 1879 war in which Chile seized a large slice of southern Peru and left Bolivia landlocked, and should not now be changed.

The government's resolution also noted that both Jewish and Palestinian communities have been key to Chile's social, cultural, political and economic development for many years, working in harmony that should serve as a model for their both the Israeli and Palestinian states. It's a message that Pinera plans to make personally during a visit to the Middle East in March.

Gabriel Zaliasnik, president of Chile's Jewish community, said he was "satisfied" with the wording of the proclamation because it did not refer to borders.

"Israelis and Palestinians will eventually define all the core issues like borders," he said. "For the Jewish people, Jerusalem and borders of the state of Israel can not be provided to third parties."

Unlike the five previous Latin American countries which have recognized a Palestinian state in the past three months, including Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia and Ecuador, Chile has a right-leaning government whose politics are not necessarily critical of the US, and by extension, of Israel.

Separately on Saturday, the PA renewed its call to the EU to recognize a Palestinian state on the 1967 borders.

“The European position must be developed from the phase of issuing very good statements rejecting settlements and calling for the establishment of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital to recognizing such as state on the 1967 borders,” said Nimer Hammad, political advisor to PA President Mahmoud Abbas.

“This is a very important issue because it will boost the peace process remarkably. In addition, it would put pressure on Israel,” Hammad said.

To date, the European Union has consistently said that direct negotiations are the best way to achieve a two-state solution.

*AP contributed to this report.*



Print



[Back to original article](#)

---

[About Us](#) | [Advertise with Us](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [RSS](#)

All rights reserved © 1995 - 2009 The Jerusalem Post.

כל הזכויות שמורות © 2009- נט אפיקי תקשורת אינטר מדיה בע"מ