

Netanyahu: The UN Is 'Theater of the Absurd'

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called the United Nations the "theater of the absurd" after the General Assembly voted in favor of a resolution calling President Trump's declaration on Jerusalem "null and void," while Palestinians hailed it as a victory.

Two weeks ago, Trump recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital setting off a firestorm of protests in the Middle East and condemnation around the world. Earlier this week, the US vetoed a similar Security Council resolution.

"Israel completely rejects this preposterous resolution. Jerusalem is our capital, always was, always will be," Netanyahu said in a video statement.

But I do appreciate the fact that a growing number of countries refuse to participate in this theatre of the absurd. So, I appreciate that," Netanyahu said.

Argentina, Mexico and Colombia, all countries that Netanyahu visited earlier this year, abstained from the vote.

"I want to again express our thanks to President Trump and Ambassador Haley for their stalwart defense of Israel and their stalwart defense of the truth," Netanyahu said.

"Inside the vast darkness of biased and pre-determined U.N. resolutions we saw light shine from 65 nations who tried to light the way for the world and prove there was still hope," said Israel's Education Minister Naftali Bennett.

The "65" Bennett was referring to were the nine votes against, 35 abstentions and 21 no-shows; 128 voted in favor of the resolution, including a number of strong US allies.

Bennett thanked Trump and Haley whom he said, “boldly lead the way for everyone to realize what we Jews know for 3,000 years: Jerusalem has always been, and will always be, the capital of Israel.”

In her speech ahead of the vote, Haley noted that the U.N. has been a “hostile place” for Israel for a long time. She said she wondered why “in the face of such hostility” Israel had chosen to remain a member.

“And then I remember that Israel has chosen to remain in this institution because it’s important to stand up for yourself,” she said.

“Israel must stand up for its own survival as a nation; but it also stands up for the ideals of freedom and human dignity that the United Nations is supposed to be about. Standing here today, being forced to defend sovereignty and the integrity of my country—the United States of America—many of the same thoughts have come to mind,” Haley said.

The Palestinians hailed the vote as a “victory for Palestine.”

Nabil Abu Rudeineh, spokesman for Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas, said, “We will continue our efforts in the United Nations and at all international forums to put an end to this occupation and to establish our Palestinian state with east Jerusalem as its capital.”

At the conclusion of her address, Haley said the U.N. vote wouldn’t stop the U.S.

“America will put our embassy in Jerusalem. That is what the American people want us to do, and it is the right thing to do. No vote in the United Nations will make any difference on that.

“But this vote will make a difference on how Americans look at the U.N. and on how we look at countries who disrespect us in

the U.N. And this vote will be remembered," she said.

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