

Israeli Official: 'We Just Ensured That Jerusalem Will Be United Forever'

Israeli legislators have approved a bill that will now make it more difficult to divide Jerusalem.

Israel Today reported that, in the pre-dawn hours Tuesday, and "following a succession of impassioned speeches both for and against," the Knesset voted on and passed the United Jerusalem Bill, an amendment to the Jerusalem Law passed in 1980 when Israel officially declared the entirety of Jerusalem to be its undivided capital.

This new legislation, *Israel Today* reports, now "requires a two-thirds majority or 80 Knesset members (MKs) or more, to alter the status of Jerusalem or surrender portions of the Holy City as part of a future peace agreement."

Obtaining a two-thirds majority to pass any bill in the Israel Knesset is a difficult task. For this bill, 64 MKs voted in favor of the bill, 51 voted against with one abstention.

"Just now we ensured that Jerusalem will be united forever," the bill's author, Israeli Education Minister Nafatali, told *Israel Today*. "We initiated the law that guards Jerusalem so that it cannot be divided without a huge majority of 80 MKs. The Mount of Olives, the Old City, the Temple Mount and the City of David will remain in our hands forever. There will be no more political maneuvers to tear our capital apart.

"This is also Israel's response to the shameful United Nations vote against Jerusalem. A holiday for Israel!"

The passage of the bill comes three weeks after U.S. President Donald Trump, in a controversial move and one that raised the

ire of the United Nations, declared Jerusalem to be Israel's capital. The U.N. General Assembly condemned Trump's decree by a 128-9 vote of its members, with 35 abstentions.

reported that the passage of the law is intended to stifle the Palestinian Authority, which wants the city's eastern half to be the capital of an independent Palestinian state.

Saeb Erekat, secretary general of the Palestine Liberation Organization's executive committee, told that the bill would "destroy" hopes for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He blamed the United States for the passage of the law. {eo}

Shawn A. Akers *is a content development editor for Charisma Media.*