

Mike Pence Affirms Bold Pro-Israel Stance Despite Worldwide Opposition

U.S. Vice President Mike Pence on Sunday revived talk of the possibility the United States may move its embassy to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv, saying President Donald Trump was seriously considering the matter.

During the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign, Trump's team spoke often about moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem. But since taking office, the contentious issue appears to have moved to the backburner.

"After decades of simply talking about it, the president of the United States is giving serious consideration to moving the American embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem," Pence said in a speech to the influential, pro-Israel U.S. lobbying group AIPAC.

Israel regards Jerusalem as its eternal and indivisible capital and wants all countries to base their embassies there, though Israeli politicians also understand that moving the U.S. embassy there could be destabilizing.

The relocation is strongly opposed by many U.S. allies as the Palestinians also claim the city as their capital.

The final status of Jerusalem is supposed to be determined via direct negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

If the United States were to relocate its embassy, it would be seen as an explicit recognition of Jerusalem belonging to Israel, potentially predetermining the outcome of eventual peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

The U.S. Senate on Thursday narrowly confirmed Trump's pick to

be ambassador to Israel, David Friedman, a bankruptcy lawyer allied with the Israeli right, who favors moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem. {eoa}

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