

What's at Stake for Israel's Future in 2015?

Palestinian Chairman Mahmoud Abbas is seeking recognition at the International Criminal Court so the Palestinians can forge ahead with war crimes charges against Israeli military and political leaders.

The move comes after a Palestinian resolution sponsored by Jordan failed this week by one vote in the U.N. Security Council.

The resolution would have forced a 3-year timetable for Israel's military to withdraw its forces to the pre-1967 borders and establish a Palestinian state, in effect causing Israel to give up all the territory it won in the Six-Day War.

With the ramped up pressure on Israel, what does the future look like for the Jewish nation?

"We want to complain. There's aggression against us, against our land. The Security Council disappointed us," Abbas said.

The bid to join the International Criminal Court is a major shift for the Palestinians, and may invite retaliation from Israel and the United States.

In recent months, the Palestinian leadership has followed through on threats to declare a state unilaterally, as opposed to crafting a negotiated settlement directly with Israel.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned that Israel may take "retaliatory steps" for Abbas' actions. Those could include prosecution of Hamas leaders on war crimes charges.

In a statement, he vowed to protect Israel's military from prosecution, calling Israel's army "the most moral in the world."

He said the Palestinian Authority is “the one who needs to fear the International Criminal Court” because of its interactions with Hamas.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Jeff Rathke said the U.S. was “deeply troubled” by the “escalatory step” taken by the Palestinians.

He called it “counter-productive” and added that it “does nothing to further the aspirations of the Palestinian people for a sovereign and independent state.”

Israel is not a member of the International Criminal Court, but judges there have the authority to serve arrest warrants, which can make travel difficult for Israeli officials.

The timing of Abbas’ actions may be an attempt to influence the Israeli elections, which will be held March 17.

But the Palestinian diplomatic hardball actually helped cap off a good week for Netanyahu, who handily won his Likud party primary Wednesday.

The prime minister’s opponents on the left want to renew negotiations with Abbas, but the belligerent Palestinian actions seem to be reinforcing the security stance of Israeli hawks.

*CBN’s **John Waage** recently spent time in Israel’s capital city of Jerusalem. For the original article, visit .*