**Israel hails new era at UN as US blocks Palestinian from key post**

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By Times of Israel Staff & AFP

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Israel’s ambassador to the United Nations Danny Danon on Friday hailed the start of a “new era at the UN” as the United States blocked the appointment of former Palestinian Authority prime minister Salam Fayyad to be the new world body envoy to Libya.

“This is the beginning of a new era at the UN. The United States stands firmly and unapologetically beside Israel,” Danon said.

Earlier, US Ambassador Nikki Haley said in a statement that she did not “support the signal this appointment would send within the United Nations,” where the Palestinians do not have full membership.

“The new Administration proved once again that it stands firmly alongside the State of Israel in the international arena and in the UN in particular,” Danon said, adding that “the new administration is working towards the joint interest of the United States, Israel and the special alliance between our two nations.

The Israeli envoy said he was confidant that under US President Donald Trump the “US stands firmly behind Israel against any and all attempts to harm the Jewish State.”

Former US ambassador to Israel Dan Shapiro slammed the move as “stunningly dumb” in a tweet.

“True it’s farce, ridiculous. But if you know Fayyad — decent, smart, honest, ethical, hardworking — it’s much more outrageous,” Shapiro said.

Israel has repeatedly complained of bias against the Jewish State at the UN where the Palestinians have an automatic majority in votes against Israel.

However, despite the new era, the Security Council failed to agree on the wording of a condemnation of the recent attack in Petah Tikva and the rocket fire at the southern resort city of Eilat.

Bolivia raised objections to the statement, saying it should include a reference to the UN resolution condemning settlements that also denounces violence.

Egypt also rejected the wording of the US-drafted statement because it noted that the rockets were fired from the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt, Israel Radio reported.

The council will again discuss the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on Wednesday, the same day that Trump is scheduled to meet with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres had informed the Security Council this week of his intention to name Fayyad to lead the UN support mission in Libya and help broker talks on a faltering political deal.

Haley said the United States was “disappointed” to see the letter from Guterres, his first appointment of an envoy to a major conflict area.

“For too long the UN has been unfairly biased in favor of the Palestinian Authority to the detriment of our allies in Israel,” said the US ambassador.

“Going forward, the United States will act, not just talk, in support of our allies.”

The UN chief had given the council until late Friday to consider the choice, and the United States came forward to raise objections.

Fayyad, 64, was prime minister of the Palestinian Authority from 2007 to 2013, and also served as finance minister twice.

He had been tapped to replace Martin Kobler of Germany, who has been the Libya envoy since November 2015.

Trump and Haley have criticized the United Nations for adopting a resolution in December that demanded an end to Israeli settlement building.

However, Trump signaled a shift from his previous support for Israeli policies, [telling a Hebrew-language newspaper](http://www.timesofisrael.com/trump-to-israeli-paper-settlement-growth-not-good-for-peace/) that he did not believe Israeli settlement expansion was “good for peace.”

Guterres’s spokesman declined to comment on the US rejection of the UN chief’s choice to represent him in Libya.