Cape Verde pledges not to vote against Israel at UN

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The island state of Cape Verde off the west coast of Africa announced on Wednesday it will no longer vote against Israel at the UN, the Prime Minister’s Office said Wednesday night.

According to a statement put out by the Prime Minister’s Office, Cape Verde’s President Jorge Carlos Fonseca directed the country’s UN delegation in New York to no longer vote against Israel at the world body.

According to the statement, the decision comes following a meeting Netanyahu had two months ago with Fonseca on the sidelines of the Economic Community of West African States conference in Liberia. Cape Verde is a country with a population of just over a half-million people.

Netanyahu issued a statement saying he welcomed Cape Verde’s decision, and that it is “the result of Israel’s intensive diplomatic activities in Africa.”

Cape Verde generally has voted against Israel at the UN, though at times it has abstained or absented itself from votes on Israel-related issues. For instance, it was not present in the General Assembly vote in 2009 accepting the Goldstone Report which accused Israel of war crimes in Gaza during Operation Cast Lead; it abstained in the UNESCO vote in 2011 to accept the Palestinians as a member state; and it voted against Israel in 2012 when it voted in favor of granting the Palestinians the status of a nonmember observer state in the UN.

Netanyahu has traveled twice to Africa since July 2016, and is scheduled to go to Togo in October for an Africa-Israel summit expected to attract the heads of state of between 20 and 30 African countries, including Fonseca.