Protesters March on Parliament to Condemn UN Resolution 2334 Over Israel-Palestine Conflict

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To the sound of 200-300 voices chanting "live, live, Israel, resolution go to Hell", Hawke's Bay pastor Nigel Woodley stood outside Parliament this afternoon and symbolically tore up a card representing the recent United Nations' resolution condemning Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian territories.

[UN Security Council Resolution 2334](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2334(2016)), which Woodley described as a knife in an ally's back, was adopted on Christmas Eve, demanding that "Israel immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem".

New Zealand co-sponsored the resolution, with Senegal and Malaysia, which said the settlements violated international law and undermined a two-state solution in Israel's conflict with Palestine.

Woodley, the pastor of the Flaxmere Christian Fellowship in Hastings, arrived in Wellington with busloads of protesters, who spilled out onto Parliament grounds waving numerous Israeli flags, wearing countless T-shirts emblazoned with the Star of David, and holding up huge signs declaring "The land of Israel belongs to Israel" and "Israel is a true democracy in the middle east".

The group were aware there would not be any Members of Parliament in the House today due to the holiday period. However, Woodley said this highlighted the resolution was adopted at a time when public response would be "stifled".

"I think that's just part of their move," he said. "Even if there are no MPs in the house ... we don't care, we think it's important that we symbolically stand on the grounds of Parliament denouncing and condemning this resolution.

Woodley stood under the Richard Seddon statue to speak to those gathered, flanked by two signs, one saying "Israel please forgive us" and the other saying "UN Resolution 2334 condemned".

He said New Zealand "held hands" with countries such as Malaysia who were "so anti-Israel it's not funny" to co-sponsor the resolution.

"They've stabbed our traditional ally Israel in the back right on Christmas for the Christian, right on Hanukkah for the Jew. A time of celebration and joy was turned into outrage," he said.

"The answer is not resolution, it's negotiation.

"As soon as the Palestinians understand that and are willing to be true peace partners, that is they are willing to come honestly to the peace table and recognise Israel as a Jewish state, and pay respect to that, then they'll get respect back."

Woodley said the Palestinians had the right to live in peace and dignity, but must allow their neighbours the same things.

He questioned whether John Key's resignation as New Zealand's Prime Minister recently was actually prompted by the Resolution.

"Did John Key resign because he didn't want his fingerprints on the dagger that was plunged into the back of the state of Israel by this government on Christmas Eve?"

Woodley said the UN was trying to squeeze the Israelis into a pocket of land the size of Northland, with no defensible borders.

He said Israel had the oldest claim on the land but were willing to negotiate with Palestine, however the UN Resolution 2334 drove the prospect of negotiated peace further away.

Among the sea of Israeli flags in the crowd stood a lone traveller holding up a Palestine Flag.

Ty Ebright, from Massachusetts, announced to a woman in a Star of David shirt that he was holding the Palestine flag, to which she replied "Oh, well, you know we love you".

Ebright told the Israel supporters gathered around him he had visited Israel, and had not seen "much love" coming from the Israelis to the Palestinians.

He said he had been attacked by the Israeli army three times while he was visiting.

"Tear gas, live rounds, rubber bullets."

He said Palestinians were constantly being attacked by the Israeli army in just such a way.

Ebright said Israel was blocking Palestinians from entering the state.

"You know how we laugh at Donald Trump saying no Muslims can come to America? Israel does it every day."

In its resolution, the UN said Israel continuing settlement expansion was "dangerously imperilling the viability of the two-state solution based on the 1967 lines".

The two-state solution is the idea of establishing an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel to create two states for two peoples.

The solution, which the UN says is better than the "unsustainable" status quo, has so far been unsuccessful for several reasons, including disagreements over where the borders should be, the fact both sides want Jerusalem for their capital, and the issue of the return of millions of Palestinian refugees to Israeli land ending the Jews' demographic majority.