**UN Security Council to meet on Israel settlement building as ‘obstacle to peace’**

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Israeli Ambassador accuses the Palestinians of trying to bypass direct talks by appealing directly to UN

The United Nations Security Council is expected to meet next Friday to discuss Israel's settlement building in the West Bank in what is widely seen as a renewed bid by the Palestinians to pass a resolution condemning Israel for the activity.

The meeting, called under the banner "The settlements as the obstacle to peace and a two-state solution," was formally requested by UN members Malaysia, Venezuela, Senegal, Egypt and Angola on behalf of the Palestinians, who hold observer status.

"The existence and expansion of the settlements on Palestinians lands which were occupied in 1967 endanger a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the two-state solution," read a position paper distributed to participants and obtained Friday by Israeli news site *Ynet*.

The paper accuses Israel and Israeli security forces of "overlooking violent acts of the settlers against Palestinians and not giving them the protection to which they are entitled under international law."

Israeli Ambassador to the UN Danny Danon slammed the Palestinians for the initiative, accusing them of "using the international community to harm the State of Israel instead of stopping incitement and sitting at the negotiation table."

"The Palestinians are conducting state terror against the communities in Judea and Samaria," he said, using the biblical name for the West Bank. He suggested that the Palestinians were trying to avoid direct bilateral talks with Israel by appealing instead to the UN and international community.

"The Palestinian leadership is choosing, once again, to reject our repeated suggestion for direct negotiations and is going straight to the UN. This move will not lead to an improvement in the Palestinian situation," Danon said. "It is the international community’s responsibility to strongly reject these attempts."

"Only an absolute stop to Palestinian incitement and the halting of terror against Israeli citizens will facilitate a dialogue," he said.

The forthcoming meeting comes after the United States issued [**an uncharacteristically strong rebuke**](http://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel/diplomacy-defense/127097-161005-united-nations-united-states-condemn-latest-israeli-settlement-plan) of the Israeli government's move last week to [**approve construction of nearly 300 new housing units**](http://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel/126799-161001-israel-approves-300-new-west-bank-settlement-homes-after-amona-demolition-order) near the West Bank settlement of Shilo, situated between Nablus and Ramallah, in an apparent compensation for a Supreme Court ruling ordering the eviction and demolition of the wildcat Jewish settlement of Amona.

The White House condemned the plan, calling it "another step towards cementing a one state reality of perpetual occupation," and further accusing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government of breaking its word to the US.

"We did receive public assurances from the Israeli government that contradict this announcement," White House spokesman Josh Earnest said. "I guess when we're talking about how good friends treat one another, that's a source of serious concern as well."

Israeli officials were reportedly shocked at the ferocity of the condemnation, according to a report by Israel'sChannel 2 on Thursday. But at least one unnamed official cited by the TV report accused the US of issuing a "disproportionate criticism" designed to conceal plans by President Obama to take unilateral anti-Israel actions in the final weeks of his presidency.